

CRITICAL MESS

by

Stephen Arthur

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Registered, WGAw.

FADE IN:

EXT. VANCOUVER, CANADA - SUMMER DAY

A view from a mountainside, looking down, over evergreen forest, and across a wide expanse of ocean, toward the part of the city that juts out into the water, and the dense array of towers in the middle. Crisp, clear sky, and a lot of green.

Gentle MUSIC carries things along.

A SERIES OF SHOTS

For a quick impression of the city-- it's a port, two million people, surrounded on three sides by the waters of a river delta, a wide fjord, and an ocean, with the rest of the city nudging against the Rocky Mountains.

We see a few sights, like maybe the Lion's Gate Bridge or Stanley Park, and we see the tourists-- Americans, Japanese, Germans.

A newspaper blows by close enough to read the title:

THE VANCOUVER SUN

CUT TO:

THE UNIVERSITY CAMPUS - DAY

A lot of buildings and a lot of students.

CUT TO:

INT. LECTURE ROOM - DR. LEON WATTS

AND IT'S ANOTHER SERIES OF SHOTS

all on LEON performing dramatic physics demonstrations before a class we can't see.

LEON has a beard and looks about thirty or so, still too young to be deadened by habit and the "rules of the game". He moves as though all his mannerisms come from watching Saturday morning cartoons. But he's big and there's a massiveness behind those movements. And he's smart-- there's wisdom and sensitivity in those bright eyes.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Throughout these shots he enlivens the demonstrations with gestures of suspense and surprise, of wonderment, humour, and the magician's touch. We HEAR NOTHING except the MUSIC that's been accompanying us so far, and these shots clearly represent a long span of time, because in each one LEON wears different clothing.

- A. We see LEON rev up a device that makes little sizzling lightning bolts float upward between two long metal poles. Wow! look at that, and hey! we can explain this by a simple equation.
- B. Now we see a long row of dominoes that grow bigger and bigger 'till the last one is three feet tall. LEON carefully nudges the smallest one and the whole thing cascades toward a final WHUMP! And then LEON is up at the board dramatically explaining things with diagrams.
- C. And now a demonstration of diffraction with a laser projector-- a phantasmagorical pattern of ruby light undulates on the wall.
- D. And now the nature of vectors and acceleration are demonstrated as LEON pulls the trigger of a rifle that shoots a dart and at the same time causes a tin can across the room to fall to the floor, but plunk! the dart found its way into the can anyway; can you imagine that?
- E. And now the final shot-- but the MUSIC has died and now the sound is on:

LEON is at the climax of a lecture and the stuff still genuinely excites him as he glances at his watch-- one minute left-- and points again to the final equation.

LEON

So E equals MC squared.

(Dramatic pause)

Can you all see what this means!

As LEON scans the class, we see his enthusiasm die. He looks like he might say "Shit, here I am again". And now finally we see them--

THE CLASS

Three hundred students fill a theatre that sweeps back to a height one hundred feet above LEON.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Many in the middle are asleep. Most at the back are talking amongst themselves. And those at the front, the only ones who are paying any attention, look like human calculators. They all look awfully young. And none of them react.

LEON looks weary now.

A GIRL in the middle, who had been combing her hair, raises her hand.

LEON

Yes.

GIRL

Is this going to be on the midterm?

LEON

Yes. What do you think the last five lectures have been for? This is it.

A flurry of shuffling and muttering as the students suddenly become attentive. Several hands raise.

GUY

(To LEON)

I didn't know this was important!
Could you go over it again?

LEON

No. I'm afraid I can't. You can see me later during my office hours if you need to.
(He closes his notes)

Now a cascade of movement and voices as books are packed up and coats are tugged on.

Suddenly, fifteen ENGINEERING STUDENTS in their characteristic blood red jackets, rush into the room. They line up in front of the class.

As everyone stops and stares, the ENGINEERS about-face, pull down their pants, and stick out their bare asses. Each is painted with a large red letter, spelling out:

ENGINEERS RULE!

LEON forces a smile that looks more like a grimace. The students start to hoot and throw things at the ENGINEERS. The ENGINEERS rush out again, hooting back and waving their arms manfully.

CUT TO:

LEON

watching the last of the students exit at the back of the theatre. Things haven't been going like he expected. You can see it in his face. He follows them out.

CUT TO:

INT. SCIENCE BUILDING ENTRANCE - MORNING

LEON has to squeeze by a group of students to get to the front doors. They are crowded around a booth with a large painted sign saying "SIGN UP FOR SCIENTOLOGY". The scene doesn't make LEON any happier.

EXT. ENTRANCE - MORNING

LEON emerges. It's clearly winter now. Bare trees, frost, darkly overcast sky. People wearing gloves and scarves.

WITH LEON

as he leaves the main walkway and turns a corner to a less well-travelled route. In the stillness we can hear the crunch of his boots on the frosty grass.

ANOTHER ANGLE - WAY HIGH UP

looking down at LEON, moving slowly to follow him.

What we can see of the city and the mountains beyond sure has a different feeling to it than it did in the summer.

LEON passes out of view behind a stone cathedral in the close f.g., but we continue to move across the face of the cathedral, viewing its majestic stained glass windows. And finally we come to a stop.

One of the windows is not stained glass. It's transparent enough to see behind it a seated woman. She must be taking confession or something.

But no-- she reaches forward and pulls out: toilet paper! Oh my God, she's sitting on a toilet.

She finishes. She stands, pulls up her pants, flushes the toilet, and recedes from view. Plumbing gurgles inside the church.

CUT TO:

INT. A LARGE PHYSICS RESEARCH LABORATORY

And if you expect a physics research lab to look like the inside of Captain Kirk's Enterprise, you're way off. It's exotic alright, but more along the lines of something put together with chewing gum and scotch tape.

Not much of the elaborate equipment can be standardized or mass-produced, so whatever works, works. Everything is jerry-rigged for a one-time use, and a lot of the stuff that fills the recesses of the huge room are the carcasses of deceased experiments.

In little clearings amid the tangle of glass tubes and wires and amplifiers and bizarre looking metal contraptions, small groups of scientists huddle around their experiments, their precious babies.

A scientist passes, and it's clear that personal appearance is irrelevant to these men of abstractions. We follow him 'till LEON is revealed in the f.g., diligently at work.

Before him crouches a monstrous electromagnet, holding in its bowels an octopus of glass flasks and pipes. LEON notes down readings from one of the various meters, makes a careful adjustment to the electronics, then looks up to see a young woman approaching.

It's ALISON-- thin, intense, and attractive enough in a stark sort of way.

LEON

Hey, I was worried you'd gotten in an accident or something.

(He reaches for her arm but she avoids him)

We have to hurry. The magnet and the helium flow have to be adjusted to keep the electron spins at thermal equilibrium.

ALISON

Leon, I'm quitting.

LEON

(Sudden distress)

What? I thought we were over all that--

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ALISON

I'm not a physics student anymore.
I'm not your assistant anymore.

(LEON goes to her)

And I'm not your woman anymore.

(LEON stops dead)

I moved my things out this
morning.

ALISON starts to gather things up-- her posters, books,
coffee cup.

LEON

Oh, God, please don't say you're
going to join that stupid cult!

(As he points to a
photo on the wall
of a man with a
serene smile)

ALISON

(As she takes down
the photo)

I told you-- he gives me the
religious experience that I
wanted from science.

LEON

I can't believe this. Suddenly
in one week everything's over.
Everything's turned upside down.
With no indication--

ALISON

No indication! You were just
too absorbed with this goddamn
stupid experiment to notice!

(LEON is shocked,
cut to the quick)

You know how everyone talks behind
your back!

LEON

I thought you understood--

ALISON

You can't violate the bloody
Second Law!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

LEON

How can you say that with the data we've got now? When I meet with the Granting Committee tomorrow--

ALISON

They won't buy it!

On the wall beside LEON is a picture frame that holds a printed quotation:

"The larger the island of knowledge
the longer the shoreline of wonder."

ALISON absently takes it to gather with the other stuff. But LEON takes it back from her.

ALISON

That's mine. You gave it to me.

LEON just looks pained, won't let her have it.

LEON

Alison, he's brainwashing you.
This is absurd.

ALISON

I have a purpose now.
(Hesitates, then
blurts out--)
And you could have been part of
it too, but you refused.

LEON

Huh? What are you talking about?
(She turns and walks
off)

Alison!

Some of the other physisists turn to look.

LEON sits back down. The photo of that man is on the floor. She must have dropped it. LEON picks it up, stares at it. The man is the HEAD PRIEST that we'll come across later.

LEON tries to be calm, but after a short pause his hand crumples the photo violently. And now his eyes look pretty moist.

CUT TO:

INT. THE LAB - A SHORT TIME LATER

as LEON pours an ounce of rum into his coffee. He's at the "relaxing" area of the lab, set aside from the experiments. At the nearest experiment, two men are haggling over some problem.

LEON just sits with a foggy stare. On the card table beside him sits a tiny black-and-white television set, and it's turned on.

NEWSCASTER

... the young man had been attempting to surgically remove his own adrenal gland, using mirrors and professional equipment, in the hopes of reducing his sexual and aggressive feelings.

Meanwhile, the two men have parted. One, a BALDING PROFESSOR, has come over to make some coffee, and has met up with a THIRD PHYSICIST, who wonders what all the trouble is. And now our attention shifts to the two of them, as LEON kind of half listens.

BALDING PROFESSOR

You see, the magnetic interference from the traffic outside is actually throwing off our measurements.

THIRD PHYSICIST

No kidding! Why don't you build a large magnetic coil to cancel out the interference?

BALDING PROFESSOR

Can't do it. Too large to fit in the lab. And we'd need water-cooled electrodes mounted above the ceiling. Impossible.

LEON

(Smiles slightly, turns to the BALDING PROF.)

Excuse me. All you have to do is connect the magnetic power supply to the water taps on either side of the room. The current will flow through the plumbing overhead.

(BALDING PROF. gives LEON an odd look)

(MORE)

CONTINUED:

LEON (CONT'D)
For water cooling, just turn on
the taps.

BALDING PROFESSOR
That's ridiculous. A modified
Helmholtz nullification device
requires special geometry.

LEON
If you say so.
(And he turns back
to the T.V., resumes
his glum look)

ON THE TELEVISION

An on-the-spot REPORTER stands before three huge tunnel
openings in the face of a granite cliff.

REPORTER
This is the site of the world's
largest collection of family
records. They belong to the
Mormon Church, who use them in
their practice of baptizing
ancestors who missed the chance
to do it themselves. The
operation employs six hundred
people and spends five million
dollars a year--

CUT TO:

INT. ROOM - LEON AND THE GRANTING COMMITTEE - THE NEXT DAY

LEON
(In mid speech)
-- just ninety thousand dollars,
that's all, and in one year we
may have proof of an unlimited
energy source, coming virtually
out of nothing.

LEON is standing before an imposing group of professors.

LEON
(Continuing)
I hardly need mention the enormous
benefit to mankind.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

FAT PROFESSOR

Dr. Watts, we're all aware that the Second Law has never been proven, but the point is it works in all possible regimes, and we can hardly go around giving grants to study--

(Derogatory smirk)

-- "perpetual motion."

LEON glares at him, the asshole. Several eyes turn to the committee head, DR. PINNOCK.

PINNOCK

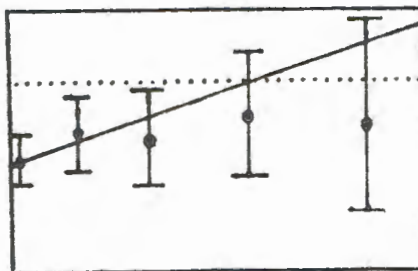
The measurements you've made to this point are valuable, but frankly I see no solid reason why the project should be extended.

LEON

(Tense)

Because I'm on the verge of disproving the Second Law of Thermodynamics, that's why!

LEON goes to a large graph he has prepared that hangs on the wall behind him.



LEON

Look.

(He runs his hand along the solid line)

This is the curve my theory predicts.

(He points to the dots with the 'error-bars')

These are the measurements I've made, with the uncertainty shown by these error-bars.

(He gestures along the dotted line)

(MORE)

CONTINUED:

LEON (CONT'D)

If this dotted line is crossed,
the Second Law has definitely
been violated.

(He points to where
the solid line
crosses it)

Now all I need is to build
equipment to make accurate
measurements, to narrow down
these error-bars.

(He indicates
narrowing with his
hands)

Then we'll know, for sure, whether
it crosses the line or not.

(Pause)

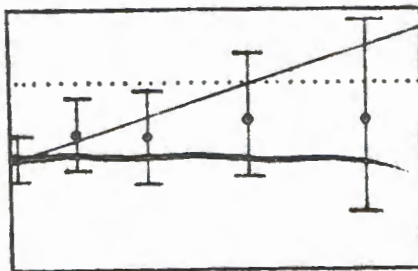
As it stands, the data is consistent
with my theory.

Now the FAT PROFESSOR gets up and walks over to LEON with
a smug look. He takes out a thick felt pen.

FAT PROFESSOR

It's also consistent with this
theory.

And with that he slashes a violent black line across
LEON'S graph, ripping the paper in several places.



The line goes through the error-bars, but doesn't cross
the dotted line.

That gesture was totally uncalled for, and it's hard to
tell whether LEON will be able to hold back his anger.

CUT TO:

INT. HALLWAY

LEON steps out of the Granting Committee room with his
stuff under his arm.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

He looks shaken up and forlorn.

Out of the nearby Men's Room comes the BALDING PROFESSOR.
He spots LEON, and hurries over to him.

BALDING PROFESSOR

Dr. Watts! Leon!

(LEON turns)

You won't believe this, but I
tried your suggestion, and it
actually worked!

LEON

Huh?

BALDING PROFESSOR

With the water pipes, remember?

LEON

Oh, yeah.

BALDING PROFESSOR

Well, you can imagine I was quite
pleasantly surprised.

LEON

I'm sure you were.

BALDING PROFESSOR

It was like the grace of God, or
something.

LEON

Or something.

The Committee members are filing out of the room now for
a lunch break.

PINNOCK comes over to LEON as the BALDING PROFESSOR leaves.

PINNOCK

(Fatherly)

Look, Leon, you have a promising
future.

(Pause)

Your hyperconduction technique
is being used now all over the
country. Why don't you stick to
what you can trust, before you
blow your chances altogether?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

LEON

Because this is more important to me than my personal advancement.

(Pause)

Unlike other people I might mention.

PINNOCK

(Souring quickly)

Your tenure decision is coming up soon, you know. And I hope you're aware that your career is essentially over if you don't get tenure. No other university will take you. Think about that.

PINNOCK walks away. That last comment has stung LEON.

WITH LEON

as he plods down the hall again. People in white lab coats pass by now.

LEON slows to a stop. Looks directionless. CATHY JOHNSTON, a pretty girl with red blotches on her lab coat, is about to enter a doorway when she notices LEON.

CATHY

Leon! Hi.

(Waves cutely)

LEON

(Affectionately, but without much life)

Oh, hi Cathy. What are you up to these days?

CATHY

Come on in.

(Smiles coyly and blushes a bit)

CATHY leads LEON into the lab where she works. Sweet, innocent, industrious little CATHY.

INT. LAB

Tubes, wires, and readout machines converge in a tangle at a dissection pan on one of the tables, where CATHY stops. A live rat is pinned there-- squirming, making noises. Electrodes protrude from its head and chest.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CATHY

It's kind of at a critical stage right now, so I'll have to work while I'm talking, if you don't mind.

LEON

Uh, no...

CATHY cuts the rat open as she talks. Applies a clamp inside it.

CATHY

(Bouncy)

Basically what I'm doing is cutting off the blood flow to the heart, then as it dies of the coronary seizure, I measure changes in brain chemicals. So unfortunately we can't use anesthetics. Could you pass me those forceps?

LEON

(Repulsed)

What, uh, is this for?

CATHY

For? Oh nothing in particular, but, you know, all knowledge is useful eventually.

(She turns to him)

Look at this.

(She holds out a lock of her long hair. It's been cut off unevenly)

Do you know about the guy who's been running around campus sneaking pieces of girls' hair?

LEON

No.

CATHY

Well-- he got me...

(She adjusts her oscilloscope)

... I don't know how.

(MORE)

CONTINUED:

LEON (CONT'D)

(Agitated)

Look I told you-- I won't do
that kind of thing! Leave me
alone!

He hangs up hard.

CUT TO:

EXT. PARK - FROZEN POND - DAY

LEON stands at the edge. A flock of mallard ducks
waddle and slip around on the ice.

LEON looks pensive, lonely, and chilled to the bone. A
toddler has wandered over near LEON, and the mother
rushes over and cautiously moves him away. LEON doesn't
notice, he's watching the ducks.

One duck after another comes flying in for a landing on
the pond. We watch them closely as they land, a whole
series of them: they all hit the ice hard on their bellies
and slide several yards with their legs stuck out to the
side. They look pretty ridiculous. On the motion of a
sliding duck, we

CUT TO:

A WHEELCHAIR SWOOSHING BY

EXT. UNIVERSITY ATHLETIC TRACK - DAY

A big banner: B.C. GAMES FOR THE DISABLED

LEON watches from the sidelines as wheelchair athletes
run a slalom. PAM OWEN, a young woman in a low slung
racing wheelchair, crosses the finish line with a last
burst of power. There are a few cheers and then a piercing
cry of delight from PAM when she finds out her time. The
others bug her about her loud voice.

PAM wheels toward the sidelines. She has strong, but
softly rounded features, and a large smiling mouth, kind
of Scandinavian looking. Not a movie star, but pretty.

LEON

Pam.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

PAM

Leon! I didn't think you'd come!

PAM keeps rolling to cool off her muscles. LEON strolls along with her.

LEON

Well, I need some good company right now.

PAM

Mm. You wanna talk about Alison?

LEON

No, I'm trying to forget about her actually. Have you found a place yet?

PAM

No! Everywhere has stairs and no one will let me install a lift so I can get in! And my friends only thought I'd be staying for a week or so.

LEON

Well don't forget we offered you a place with us when you need it. In fact, we-- I mean I have an extra room now.

PAM

Really? What about the lift?

LEON

I'll help install it.

LEON looks happier. He feels good to be able to help PAM, and it's clear that her sunny attitude is making him feel better about himself.

PAM

(Beaming)

Well-- I think I'll take you up on that!

PAM grabs LEON'S belt, to let herself be pulled, to rest her arms.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

LEON makes like an oxen.

PAM

Doctor Watts, the world is lucky
to have you!

LEON gets behind her now and pushes. They accelerate to
a run. Dangerously fast.

PAM

Wheee!

And on that movement and sound we

CUT TO:

A GOLD RING

as it rolls across the stark black and white shapes of a
typed letter. The ring collides with the base of a beer
glass that sits on the paper and falls over, spinning
for a moment atop the letterhead of the Physics Department.

INT. PUB - DAY

LEON is sitting at a table with the letter in front of
him, plus five empty beer glasses. He looks depressed
as hell.

THE LETTER

The part that we see:

... regret to inform you
that in light of your failure to
obtain research funding the
Department of Physics is no
longer in need of your services....

LEON

He looks around him without seeing. Except for a WOMAN
in a booth, across, the pub is completely empty-- and
the feeling we get is just that: emptiness.

LEON stares at the letter again. It's an emotional
moment-- we can see he truly feels hopeless now.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

LEON'S expression changes a little and he reaches into a briefcase beside him, takes out another letter, and places it down beside the first one.

THE LETTER

It has but one simple sentence:

THE OFFER STILL STANDS.

LEON

shakes his head slowly in disbelief. He fiddles with his ring some more.

Finally LEON gulps down the last of his beer. He picks up the letters. He stands up, and starts to put on his jacket.

In the gloomiest corner of the pub, the WOMAN in the booth is getting morosely drunk, too. And she smokes like a chimney.

LEON plods by the WOMAN. Suddenly, the WOMAN'S hair catches on fire from her cigarette. It's a blaze of flames, and it's shocking.

LEON rushes over to help. The WOMAN grabs hold of her hair-- it's a wig-- pulls it off, and throws it to the floor.

LEON stamps on the flaming wig 'till it's out. And that's not easy to do.

LEON turns to the WOMAN now, shaken up, expectant. She is still drinking as though nothing had happened, except that she looks maybe a little more morose than before.

The WOMAN turns to LEON and glares.

WOMAN

Fuck off!!

Wow. LEON is stunned. He steps back.

LEON turns to leave and there's an odd, uncomprehending look in his eyes. He makes his way unsteadily out of the pub.

CUT TO:

EXT. DOWNTOWN - DAY

with LEON as he lumbers along the sidewalk like a zombie wading in molasses. Rush hour is starting. The overcast sky is a frozen ceiling of grey furrows.

LEON is completely oblivious to his surroundings. He starts to cross the street against the light and several car honks jolt him back onto the curb.

LEON looks around at the people and buildings like he's suddenly found himself in an alien world. Everything looks damp. Clammy, even.

The light finally changes and he crosses with the crowd. The people who pass by look strange somehow, like caricatures of real people. What we see gives us a taste of the alienation LEON feels.

LEON comes to a stop a little ways down the block, at the Bank of Montreal's 'Day and Night Teller'. He solemnly inserts his identity card to withdraw the remains of his account. It comes out in a little envelope of cash. Then he turns and walks back the way he came, looking more and more fugitive and withdrawn.

CUT TO:

AN ALLEYWAY DOWN THE BLOCK

From around a stone corner at the mouth of the alley, we can see down the street, and see LEON approaching. A thin young man comes into view against the alley wall. He looks nervous and apprehensive. He pokes his head around the corner briefly, looking back towards LEON.

DAVID FREIDMAN looks very determined in spite of his tension. He pulls a black skier's touque over his head, concealing all but his eyes. In one hand he has a pair of handcuffs.

And now, as LEON passes the alleyway, DAVID grabs him by the arms and jerks him violently back against the alley wall.

DAVID

Hold still!

But before he can clamp on the handcuffs, LEON does something we might not expect-- he goes bezerk.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

With a wild look and an even wilder snarl, LEON grabs DAVID'S neck with both hands and with tremendous strength actually lifts DAVID clear off the ground to arm's length above him.

DAVID chokes, terrified. Time slows.

Then BAM! and DAVID has knocked LEON out with a blow from a small metal rod. They both collapse to the ground.

WIDE SHOT FROM INSIDE THE NARROW ALLEY

Someone passes on the sidewalk outside but it's darker in here and they aren't seen.

DAVID is dazed and scared. But he quickly hoists the unconscious LEON up into a large industrial garbage container. Then he jumps in with him.

INSIDE THE GARBAGE CONTAINER

DAVID thrashes around in the heap of office trash. He gets LEON'S wrists handcuffed behind him. Then he gags him. Then he ties LEON'S legs expertly with rope, just as LEON starts to come to.

LEON starts to move a little. DAVID sits back and rubs his neck. Then DAVID removes LEON'S wallet, taking out the money and pulling out the bank identity card.

LEON is groggily conscious now. DAVID does a sudden double take at the name on the identity card. He freezes. He pours over the other I.D. in the wallet.

DAVID

Holy shit! Leon!

DAVID starts to help LEON sit up. Then he backs away like he's going to run off. He's caught between staying and fleeing.

DAVID

Leon Watts!

A tense pause. Then DAVID rips off his mask.

DAVID

It's David Freidman!

(Pause)

Oh Christ! I didn't recognize--
with the beard and-- oh, Christ!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DAVID shoves the money and wallet back into LEON'S pocket. LEON is just staring.

DAVID gingerly removes the gag.

DAVID

Leon? You do recognize me don't you?

(He wrings his hands)
Oh, Christ, I've never done anything like this before and-- holy shit, Leon!

LEON looks like he's suppressing some kind of emotional upheaval. It's an awfully tense moment for DAVID.

LEON explodes into hilarious laughter. He sinks back into the garbage, laughing and laughing.

DAVID starts a nervous laugh now too. He hastens to remove the handcuffs and rope.

LEON'S gasps of laughter become more and more hysterical 'till tears come to his eyes and he's laughing and crying simultaneously.

Finally it starts to subside. LEON tries to talk while still short of breath.

LEON

What the... what the hell are you... doing here!

DAVID looks terribly ashamed, while grinning at the same time. A difficult combination.

We pull back from the two of them as they face each other, their heads poking ludicrously out of the garbage container. By the time DAVID replies, we are out of the alley and into the traffic, and he's drowned out.

We continue to pull back. The stone walls of the alleyway close in. Traffic wipes the frame in front of us. Hold.

CUT TO:

INT./EXT. PAY TELEPHONE - PAM

as she dials the last number, waits a moment.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

LEON'S VOICE

(Hasty)

Hi, this is Leon, I'm going up to my cabin for a day or two so I won't be available. Please leave a message so I can return your call. Bye.

PAM looks disappointed. We hear the BEEEEEEP!

CUT TO:

EXT. HORESHOE BAY - FERRIES - DAY

At the outer edge of West Vancouver, huge ferries dock for transportation up the coast and to various islands.

It's finally sunny. A long line of cars waits for one of the ferries to dock and let them on.

LEON'S car is near the head of the line. He and DAVID lean against it, talking with relish. LEON'S attitude seems different-- he's a lot looser than before.

DAVID

Remember the time you committed suicide off the Lion's Gate Bridge?

LEON

Huh?

DAVID

Symbolically. You threw your diary over the side.

LEON

(Remembers)

Oh, yeah... right.

(Chuckles)

And it worked too. I stopped being depressed.

DAVID

And hey, remember when that cop was searching our place for dope and he started to open that bible with the zipper and said, "Wouldn't it be a shame if it was in here."

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

LEON

Right, Right.
(More chuckling)

DAVID

That was a whole decade ago,
you know.

They both fall silent.

The cars from the ferry are finally unloading and they
pass by. LEON and DAVID get back into the car.

INT. CAR - LEON AND DAVID

DAVID

Yeah, so after I left Big Sur
I supervised a machining crew
making gas compressors.

The last cars are gone and it's time for the new ones to
board. But the guy at the head of the line has fallen
asleep.

DAVID

Then finally I decided, shit,
I'm going to get my share, and
that's when I started my company
to make three-D games.

One of the dock workers comes over to the front car and
taps on the window to wake the driver.

DAVID

And you know where that left me!

The driver wakes with a start. Wild-eyed and half asleep,
he revs his engine.

DAVID

Life is fucking absurd, man.

The front car takes off with a screech, top speed.

LEON

That it is.

They watch as the car accelerates onto the ferry. It
passes clear through it and out the far end at a hundred
miles an hour, hitting the ocean with a tremendous
splash. It floats pathetically.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

LEON and DAVID stare. They look at each other. People are jumping out of their cars, deckhands run by, things get flustered.

And now we get a hint of how LEON has changed-- from his reaction we can see that instead of feeling concern, he takes the incident as absurd comedy.

CUT TO:

EXT. MOVING FERRY - UPPER DECK - DAY

LEON and DAVID stand at the rail, watching the wake fan out below. The wind blows their hair all crazy. Small rocky islands pass slowly, changing shape with the change in angle.

The ship's horn blasts nearby. DAVID jumps into the air in fright, practically going over the side. But he recovers right away, looks embarrassed. The people behind the observation window laugh at DAVID good-naturedly.

LEON

You really are in trouble.

DAVID

No kidding.

LEON

How much do you owe?

DAVID

Six grand.

LEON

Are you sure this loan shark is here, in Vancouver?

DAVID

Oh, yeah-- they fucking chased me yesterday.

LEON

Well, you're welcome to stay at my cabin as long as you like.

DAVID

Thanks. You can imagine how much I appreciate this.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

LEON
Let's go up front.

CUT TO:

EXT. FRONT DECK

LEON and DAVID stroll the deck together like aristocrats, surveying the ocean, the land, the people.

DAVID
Look at what's happened to us.
Look at you-- you're a goddamn
genius as far as I can tell, but
you keep getting the short end
of the stick.

LEON
But 'intelligence is it's own
reward', remember?

They share the sarcasm with a look between them.

CUT TO:

EXT. SNOWY MOUNTAIN TRAIL - DAY

LEON and DAVID walk amidst trees sagging with snow. They are even more at ease now. And oddly enough, they are munching on snowballs soaked in some bright green liquid.

DAVID
You deserve more respect. Admit
it.

(Pause)
Pass the creme-de-menthe, please.

LEON passes a bottle and DAVID pours more liqueur on his snowball.

DAVID
(Continuing)
And why is that? It's because
most people are dumb jerks,
that's why--

LEON
Well...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

LEON is uneasy with DAVID'S words, but he's nevertheless finding something refreshing about them.

DAVID

One thing every revolutionary knows is that you've got to take what you deserve. The end justifies the means.

(Pause)

Like this experiment of yours, right? It's too fucking tragic to put up with shit like that.

LEON is listening. He has a curious smile. He steps off the trail and absently pulls on a branch. A shower of snow falls around him.

CUT TO:

EXT. THE TOPS OF SNOW-LADEN HEMLOCKS - DAY

We look from treetop level toward a huge snow-covered mountain peak in the b.g. The nearest tree has lost a lot of its snow somehow.

LEON'S VOICE

I'd like to make a point!

And an arm shoots up from near the top of the snowless tree, pointing at the heavens. LEON is nestled in the branches of the tree.

CLOSER ON LEON

And the adjacent tree is rustling now, as DAVID climbs it.

LEON

(Preaching)

Do you realize that if at this very moment, God were to take all of humanity and roll us up in his mighty hands into a solid ball, that ball would have a diameter less than a mile!

DAVID leans his head out and chuckles.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

LEON

(Sounding very
concerned)

And yet, most of us travel far
more than a mile in the normal
course of the day....!

DAVID breaks out laughing, slips, and disappears from
view.

CUT TO:

EXT. BACK ON THE TRAIL AGAIN

as they continue walking.

LEON

I don't know what's the matter
with me. I feel like I just
don't give a hoot, toot, walla
poot.

DAVID

(Chuckles)

Good for you.

LEON

(Profoundly)

Like I always say, very few of
the world's problems can be
traced to inadequate poltergeist
refunds.

DAVID laughs heartily. He's really taken by LEON'S
absurd mood. LEON looks pleased and surprised to have
such an appreciative audience. But beneath that, some-
thing tells us that his nonsensical speech is just the
tip of an iceberg.

They come upon the end of the trail. Here the forest
opens onto a large frozen lake. Huge stumps protrude
from the ice, with massive chunks of ice perched on them.

CUT TO:

EXT. OUT ON THE LAKE

LEON rambles along a snowy part, while DAVID skids across the smooth ice.

We hear LEON vaguely in the b.g. while DAVID slides back and forth and plays with ice chunks.

LEON

I am not drunk.
I am not bad.
I am not old.
I am not sad.
I am not to the east
I am not to the west.
I am not up.
I am not down.
I am not inside out.
Therefore I am Leon Watts.

CUT TO:

DOWN ON THE ICE - CLOSE ON LEON AND DAVID

They lie belly down on the ice, out of the wind, facing each other. From this angle, they look like beached whales. Or maybe germs under a microscope. Or gods surveying the universe. Take your choice.

LEON

Tell me, David.

LEON slides a smooth, triangular chunk of ice across to DAVID

DAVID

(Catching the ice
chunk)

Could you be more specific?
(He slides the ice
back to LEON)

LEON

Do you know how an atomic bomb
is made?

(He slides the ice
back to DAVID)

DAVID

Why, yes, I believe I do. One
simply needs the critical mass
of plutonium, in two separate
pieces, and some dynamite to force
the two pieces together--

(MORE)

CONTINUED:

DAVID (CONT'D)

(He rams the ice chunk
into another one)

-- to start the chain reaction.
Correct?

(He passes the ice
back to LEON)

LEON

Correct. With minor complications
of course. And do you also know
that one can handle plutonium
without fear of harmful radiation?

(Passes the ice to
DAVID)

DAVID

No, in fact I did not. How
surprising indeed. What are you
leading to, Dr. Watts?

(Passes to LEON)

LEON

If someone offered to pay you a
million dollars if you could build
an atomic bomb, would you attempt
it?

(Passes to DAVID)

DAVID

Why certainly. I think that
would be frightfully exciting.

(Passes to LEON)

LEON

Would you seriously?

(Passes to DAVID)

DAVID

(Pause)

For a million dollars-- no
question.

(Passes to LEON)

LEON

What if the bomb is for a
terrorist group?

(Passes to DAVID)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DAVID

Hmmm. No, I'd have to draw the line there. I couldn't do that.
(Passes to LEON)

LEON

What if you could trick them, say, by substituting a tiny bit of the plutonium with another element, so that it could not explode?
(Passes to DAVID)

DAVID

So there would actually be less than the critical mass of plutonium?
(Passes to LEON)

LEON

Exactly.
(Passes to DAVID)

DAVID

Well, that would be dandy, but what about when they use it and it doesn't go off? They may be a little upset with me.
(Passes to LEON)

LEON

What if you figured they would be using it as a threat of some kind, so they would not need to actually detonate it?
(Passes to DAVID)

DAVID

Well.
(Pause)
If the risk was low enough I suppose I would still do it. I suspect there is a point to these questions, Dr. Watts.
(Passes to LEON)

LEON

Sure. I'm testing your moral character.
(Pass to DAVID)

DAVID

Did I pass?
(LEON smiles)

CUT TO:

INT. LEON'S CABIN - NIGHT

Fire blazes in the fireplace, makes the place cozy. LEON and DAVID lie on the rug facing the fire, their faces flickering. They look pleasantly exhausted. DAVID, in fact, had dozed off.

LEON gazes thoughtfully into the flames. Something is building inside him. We hold for a moment more, then

LEON

(Turns to DAVID)

David?

(No response. LEON
shakes him gently)

David.

DAVID

(Wakens groggily)

Hnghh?

LEON

Listen. About that atomic bomb.

DAVID

Um. Yeah?

LEON

Well-- I have actually been
approached with an offer just
like we discussed.(DAVID comes sharply
awake)And what's more-- I know how
to get the plutonium.

They exchange the kind of looks you'd expect.

DAVID

Holy shit!

CUT TO:

EXT. LEON'S CABIN - EARLY MORNING

Smoke billows from the chimney. Birds chirp. Ice crystals sparkle.

CUT TO:

INT. CABIN

LEON and DAVID sit at a rough table. They've been up all night.

DAVID is tense and excited. So is LEON, but more troubled.

DAVID

Okay. We figure there's a ten percent chance they'll actually try to explode the bomb and discover it doesn't work. One in ten odds we'll get killed. Right?

LEON

(Reluctant)

Right.

DAVID

And there's no problem with substituting a bit of the plutonium, right?

LEON

Not if you're careful. But... all we have to go on is this guy's word that they plan to use it only as a threat to get something.

DAVID

Yeah, but if we don't make it for them, they'll get a bomb that works from someone else. Hell, we'd be doing a good deed!

LEON nods but still looks troubled. It looks like a stalemate for now. Too heavy. They sip some more coffee, thinking it over for the millionth time.

DAVID

Hey-- here's an analogy that might help decide.

DAVID takes out a one dollar bill and lays it on the table. With a pen he draws six bold zeros after the "1". Then he rummages around in his pack and pulls out a tin of aspirins. He lays ten of them out in a line beside the bill.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DAVID

(Dramatically)

Okay. Here is a million dollar bill. And here are ten pills. Nine of the pills are aspirin, and one is cyanide. All you have to do is swallow one of these pills, and you can have the million dollar bill.

(Pause)

Think of what we would do with a million dollars. Think of your experiment.

The analogy seems to strike a chord with LEON. He looks at the pills. Then at DAVID. Then back at the pills.

DAVID

Remember what your experiment will mean to mankind.

LEON concentrates. The atmosphere is tense. It's a heavy moment. His hand creeps closer and closer to the pills.

A pause. And then, in a flash, LEON snatches up one of the pills and pops it into his mouth. He suddenly looks alive and determined.

Their adrenalin flows. Nothing need be said now, it's all in their looks-- they're going for it.

DAVID goes to the window and looks out at the rising sun.

LEON sits deadly still for a moment. Then he gets up too, opens the door, and stands on the threshold in the biting air. Hold.

CUT TO:

EXT. THE WIDE OCEAN

Bright and calm. In the b.g. the mist on the mountains is clearing off. There's a WHACK! and a small white projectile shoots out over the water. It dwindles to a point and disappears. And now we see where it came from:

EXT. STANLEY PARK, VANCOUVER - SUNNY MORNING

A MAN stands at the edge of a seawalk that outlines a forested peninsula attached to downtown.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

The MAN is practicing his golf strokes, hitting a bucket of balls out into the ocean. Near him waits a large black limousine.

THE MAN

has a mustache and wears expensive clothing. He looks cool and self-confident. The last golf stroke has pleased him. He tees up another ball.

A cyclist stops nearby and stares incredulously.

CUT TO:

A LITTLE WAYS AWAY

LEON and DAVID peer through the trees at the MAN on the seawalk as he whacks another ball. The MAN'S name is AMBROSE, and he's the one who made LEON the offer.

LEON

Showing off...

They exchange looks of anticipation. The cyclist leaves, and LEON starts off through the trees.

DAVID

Good luck.

LEON emerges from the trees and heads toward AMBROSE while DAVID waits behind, pulling out binoculars.

THROUGH THE BINOCULARS

We see LEON stop a yard from AMBROSE. AMBROSE glances at him, then returns his attention to his golf strokes.

He finally hits the ball, waits to watch it hit the water, then turns to LEON.

DAVID

lowers the binoculars to look about nervously, then

THROUGH THE BINOCULARS AGAIN

we see AMBROSE and LEON talking intently.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

AMBROSE shakes his head and makes a "no way" gesture.
LEON shrugs. AMBROSE goes over to the limousine and talks to someone behind its opaque windows.

DAVID

looks around again, thought he heard something-- it was just a squirrel.

THROUGH THE BINOCULARS AGAIN

we see AMBROSE return to LEON. After a few words, AMBROSE extends his hand and they shake.

DAVID

The squirrels in Stanley Park are very tame. The squirrel jumps from its branch and lands on DAVID'S binoculars. DAVID yells and drops his binoculars, falls over into a bush. The squirrel scampers back up the tree.

Now LEON returns. DAVID jumps up to meet him.

LEON looks a little dazed. He keeps walking past DAVID, who follows.

DAVID

(Excited)

Well? Did you make the deal?

LEON

(Smiling now, in a determined sort of way)

I made the deal.

(He holds out a package)

And we got an advance.

CUT TO:

EXT. STANLEY PARK SHORELINE - DAY

LEON and DAVID sit by a tide pool. LEON counts out the last few bills from a package of one hundred dollar bills.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DAVID
(Incredulous)
Shee-it!

LEON
(Finished counting)
Ten thousand.

DAVID
And fifty thousand more on receipt
of plutonium.

LEON
Yup.

LEON looks around, at the ocean, at the city, at a passing seaplane. He has a far-away look-- he's crossed a threshold, his actions are predetermined now, and he'll have to play them out with a vengeance.

LEON
It's God's will, David. God's
will.

DAVID chuckles. They get up and step from rock to rock back towards the seawall.

LEON
(Efficient)
Okay. It's Tuesday today, so
that leaves us six days before
I fly to Toronto for the grand
theft. In that time, you can
pay off your loan shark, install
the lathe and saw in the basement
and I'll work on the design.

DAVID
Right.

LEON
(Stops walking)
I just remembered-- there's this
parapalegic girl, Pam Owen.
She's just in from Calgary and
she needs a place for awhile.

DAVID
Oh really. Do you think--?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

LEON

It's okay. Really. We'll keep the basement locked, and she can't get down stairs anyways.

DAVID

Well... alright.

(They resume walking)

Who is she?

LEON

I met her at a party a couple of months ago. She used to be a downhill racer 'till she broke her back. I think she just quit her job as a guidance counsellor.

DAVID

You've got a new woman already, eh?

LEON

Just a friend. For the moment.

(Pause)

Like I always say, you've got to work hard to ruffle His Majesty's notorious scallop.

CUT TO:

EXT. BUILDING FRONT IN EAST VANCOUVER - DAY

A large sign over the doorway:

WESTERN ZARATHUSTRIAN CHURCH

CUT TO:

INT. WESTERN ZARATHUSTRIAN CHURCH - DAY

A shaft of light streams in from a high window, back-lighting a group of ten or fifteen Zarathustrian priests who sit cross-legged on a large persian rug that spreads almost the width of the large, bare room. There are some oil lamps and flowers. The priests wear normal suits except for their bright orange, collarless shirts, which look like maybe sackcloth. The priests sit in two parallel rows two yards apart, facing each other, with the HEAD PRIEST centered at the end of the rows.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

The HEAD PRIEST is the same man who took ALISON away from LEON, and, in fact, ALISON sits beside him, in a wrap-around sheet. She looks distinctly more crazed and electrified since the last time we saw her. The whole bunch look pretty spacey, except for the HEAD PRIEST.

Footsteps sound in the hall outside. A young man, AMBROSE'S ASSISTANT, enters and holds the door open for AMBROSE. AMBROSE approaches the group with a cool and jaunty stride, and sits down before the priests, joined by his ASSISTANT.

AMBROSE
(Smiling slyly)
We made the deal. Thanks to
your prettiest convert.

Everyone looks at ALISON, who flushes with pride.

AMBROSE
But he can only get enough
plutonium for one bomb, not two.
So you won't have the option of
detonating one bomb as a test.
But in view of your strict time
limit--

HEAD PRIEST
Won't that be a problem, then?

AMBROSE
I don't think so. Watts agreed
that another scientist can check
out the plutonium before he gets
the money to build the bomb, and
can also inspect the bomb mechanism
before the plutonium is installed.

HEAD PRIEST
Hm. And where will you get this
other scientist?

AMBROSE
We already have one 'on hold' at
the university. I was black-
mailing him for a similar purpose,
but he couldn't get any plutonium.
(Aside to ASSISTANT)
Pinnock is still there isn't he?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ASSISTANT

Yes, but I haven't got through to him yet.

AMBROSE

That's okay. Doctor Pinnock we can count on.

HEAD PRIEST

Ambrose. Can you still guarantee the bomb will be ready in time?

AMBROSE

Yes. Watts knows he won't get paid if it's not.

HEAD PRIEST

Neither will you, my dear little mercenary.

AMBROSE and the HEAD PRIEST seem to harbour a mutual contempt for each other.

AMBROSE

Listen, um, I've been getting quite a hankering lately to know just what these demands of yours are going to be...

(He's obviously
been told not to
ask)

ONE OF THE PRIESTS

Just keep our noses out of the dirty work, and don't worry about it.

There's no further response.

AMBROSE

(Shrugs)

That's what I'm paid for.

(Starts to get up)

The HEAD PRIEST has picked up a large sacred book. He holds it up to the light and clears his throat.

AMBROSE and his ASSISTANT stop in their tracks as the HEAD PRIEST speaks.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

HEAD PRIEST

(In a thunderous
voice)

"Then the Saoshyant, the last of
the saviours, shall restore the
world, which will thenceforth
never decay and never perish,
and be master of its fate, when
the dead will rise, and the world
will be restored at the wish of
Ahura Mazda.

(He lowers the book,
and the priests
look contemplative)

AMBROSE

Oh.

(They leave the room)

CUT TO:

EXT. TORONTO - DAY

A congested freeway. The CN Tower.

CUT TO:

EXT. A BUILDING

Fairly old. Nondescript. A few stories high.

THE SIGN OVER THE ENTRANCE: "NUCLEAR RESEARCH FACILITY"

CUT TO:

INT. HALLWAY - DAY

LEON meets an old friend-- a mousey bookworm type named
TERRY.

LEON

(Warmly)

Terry!

(LEON extends his
hand. TERRY is
confused for a
second then realizes
that he's supposed
to shake.)

You're looking good.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

TERRY
(He's shy)
Thanks.

LEON
I'm dying to see your experiment.
(TERRY looks pleased)

CUT TO:

INT. ANOTHER HALLWAY

LEON and TERRY round the corner, engrossed in theory.

LEON
But if that's true, my god, that
means the uncertainty principle
is not absolute!

TERRY
Well--
(He doesn't like
bold conjecture)
-- all this stuff about negative
mass is just mathematics, you
know. It doesn't mean negative
mass is real.

LEON
But it's as real as any accepted
theory.

TERRY
Well, I don't know, I just do
the experiments.

They pass a man at a desk beside a detection screen kind
of like at the airport. A large sign says ENTERING
ZONE TWO.

TERRY
(Hands LEON a
radiation badge to
put on)
Are you familiar with our zone
system?

LEON
Vaguely.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

TERRY

Zone three is the highest radiation risk. When you go back from zone three to zone two, or from two to one, you have to check yourself for radiation.

LEON

I see.

They enter ZONE THREE. There's no talk between them for the moment. People pass, looking quite casual. It looks like a normal office building, except for signs on doors saying DANGER-- HIGH RADIATION and things like that.

TERRY

Just a second.

TERRY stops to tie his shoe, resting his foot on a spooky looking contraption the size of a washing machine that just sits unattended in the hallway with a sign that reads

HIGH RADIATION

175 milli REMs / hr. interior.
65 milli REMs / hr. surface.

LEON

Isn't that a little dangerous?

TERRY

(Pleased to be an
authority)

Oh, no, not at all. People shouldn't be so afraid of radiation.

(They walk on)

It's all precisely measured.

(Points to his
radiation badge)

We know how much we're getting every day. We know how much is safe. People are always afraid of what they don't understand.

CUT TO:

INT. TERRY'S LAB - TERRY AND LEON

More physics stuff.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

TERRY

Now when the positron beam hits the plutonium target, we detect the decay products here, in the cloud chamber, and then over here--

(Points to a mass of electronic gear)

-- is where we measure the ratio of quarks to anti-quarks.

LEON'S POV

Follow focus from the measuring equipment to a sign on a door beyond-- "AUTHORIZED PERSONNEL ONLY"-- then back to the equipment.

TERRY

I'll show you the wave equations.

LEON

Great.

As TERRY rummages through papers, a long-haired, bearded young man in faded jeans enters the lab and goes to the "Authorized Personnel" door. LEON watches him open it with a key. Inside is a closet with shelves of metal vials. The young man picks one out, closes the door, and signs his name on a sheet of paper clipped to the door. He leaves.

LEON

You must have some pretty high-grade plutonium in there.
(Indicates closet)

TERRY

Oh sure.

LEON

Isn't it dangerous just keeping it in a closet like that?

TERRY

Not at all. Plutonium is harmless-- mainly alpha rays, which are stopped by paper.

(This is true)

And the neutron radiation is negligible.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

LEON

Actually I meant the danger of someone stealing it.

TERRY

Oh. No, the only people with keys are the researchers, and we keep track of what we use.

LEON

But still, if someone wanted to make a bomb...

TERRY

It just wouldn't be feasible. You know how hard it is to build an atomic bomb. It would cost a fortune. Even you couldn't do it.

LEON

I see.

(TERRY starts to lay out the equations)

Say-- if you don't mind, why don't we look at these over lunch at a nice restaurant somewhere? I haven't had breakfast, you see.

TERRY

Well I usually eat in the cafeteria here.

LEON

Fine.

CUT TO:

INT. CAFETERIA

LEON and TERRY stand in line with their trays. The physisists and technicians seated at the tables look like they might be employees for the telephone company.

LEON

Oh, brother. I left my wallet in my jacket in your lab. I better zip back and get it while you hold my place.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

TERRY

Okay. You better hurry.
(Fishes in his pocket)
Here's the keys.

CUT TO:

INT. HALLWAY

LEON walks fast. When people pass he looks at his watch like he's late for a meeting.

CUT TO:

INT. TERRY'S LAB

The door opens and LEON enters. No one here-- so far so good.

LEON hurries to the closet and starts trying out keys, being careful to keep glancing over his shoulder.

CUT TO:

EXT. DOOR TO TERRY'S LAB

A WOMAN in a lab coat pushes a supply cart up to the door. She stops there, checks the room numbers on a clipboard.

CUT TO:

INT. LAB

A key works. The closet opens. LEON peers anxiously at the rows of vials.

Behind LEON, the lab door opens. LEON turns just in time to see the front of the supply cart entering.

CUT TO:

INT. CAFETERIA - TERRY AT TABLE

as he jerks his head up, almost in fear. There's a BEAUTIFUL WOMAN towering over him.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BEAUTIFUL WOMAN
Do you mind if I sit here?
There's no more tables.

TERRY
Oh, um, yes. I mean no. I mean
I don't mind.

She smiles politely at TERRY as she sits and he quickly looks back down at his food.

He looks nervously at his watch.

CUT TO:

DARKNESS AND A VERTICAL SLIT OF LIGHT

Something moves in the light and we realize that this is

LEON'S POV - INSIDE THE CLOSET

The WOMAN is doing something just outside the crack of the door. We hear LEON'S rapid breathing.

CLOSE LEON

in the darkness, watching through the crack.

CLOSE - THE CRACK

The WOMAN is very close, and coming closer. She seems to be staring straight in at us.

Something is about to happen. And it does-- she picks her nose.

LEON

relieved. He listens till he hears her leave the room. Then he slowly, carefully, opens the door wider for a look. Clear.

LEON flicks on the closet light. Surveys the vials. He finds what he's looking for-- a row of glass vials, each with a lump of rock that would fit nicely in the palm of your hand. They are each labelled "PLUTONIUM 239 - 2 kilograms".

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

LEON lifts up his sweater and shirt, tucks three of the vials under his belt, and quickly tapes them to his belly. Now--

ON THE DOOR

LEON'S hand and pen skim over the signatures and what they've taken in the last month. A few simple alterations like changing a "1" to a "4", and the whole thing is mixed up. The theft is covered.

LEON

He still has to get out of the building.

CUT TO:

INT. HALLWAY - THE MAN AT THE DETECTION SCREEN

Down the hall we see LEON and TERRY.

LEON

Thanks again, Terry.
(Waves goodbye)

And now LEON approaches the screen, looking nonchalant-- actually he's not that great of an actor.

AT THE SCREEN

LEON is about to step through the detection screen.

MAN

Excuse me.
(LEON turns back)
You'll want to check your hands
and shoes first.
(He points)

There are two little detection screens to one side, one at waist level for hands, and one on the floor, for shoes. Yes, that's really how they do it.

LEON tests his shoes. Fine.

Then his hands-- a buzzer goes off! Oh God now what?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

LEON

I don't understand, I haven't touched any--

MAN

Oh, it's nothing to worry about. This sort of thing happens three or four times a day. Just give your hands a scrub over here.

There's a little basin and scrub brush nearby. LEON scrubs his hands. He's truly mystified.

LEON tests his hands again and they're okay. LEON looks at the MAN and we can tell he wants to ask the MAN some questions, but he decides against it.

Now he goes through the big detector. Fine. No alarm.

MAN

Have a nice day.

CUT TO:

EXT. LEON'S HOUSE - DAVID AND PAM - DAY

DAVID and PAM reach the small two-storey house just as it starts to rain. A hydraulic lift-- a platform with a little cast iron railing-- waits for PAM beside the front steps.

DAVID is carrying a bag of groceries. He watches PAM roll onto the lift, then he gets on with her for the ride. PAM'S purse falls off her lap and they both bend down to pick it up.

DAVID

Hey-- you don't have any brakes!

PAM holds down the switch for the hydraulic pump, and with a hum the lift starts to rise, very, very, slowly.

PAM

They get in the way when I'm racing.

DAVID

Yeah, but-- don't you need them for stopping on hills and stuff?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

PAM

I manage okay.

PAM is smiling-- partly because of DAVID'S puzzlement at her going without brakes, and partly because of the ludicrously slow ascent of the lift.

You can barely tell that the thing is moving. And meanwhile they are getting drenched.

DAVID

This is ridiculous.

CUT TO:

INT. LEON'S HOUSE - DAY

Pam pulls herself off her wheelchair and onto the couch in front of the T.V. Most of the furnishings are old and dilapidated, or handmade by LEON. But it's cosy, and it's home. We hear the T.V. program dimly as PAM picks her legs off the footrests and places them on the floor.

DAVID (O.S.)

That lift must be quite an expense.

PAM

No. It's free. The Parapalegic Association lent it to me and helped install it.

DAVID

(Entering)

Really? What do they get out of it?

He sits down in her wheelchair, looks comfortable.

PAM

They get to help people, that's what.

DAVID

Oh.

PAM

(Points to T.V.)

Look at this.

ON THE T.V.

A reporter with a microphone stands before a milling crowd of protesters gathered around the steps of a large building. The reporter holds a microphone out to one of the protesters.

PROTESTER

We represent the Coalition for
Appropriate Technology. We
advocate decentralized technology
that can be operated by the
individual, at the level of the
local community.

We are shown shots of the crowd marching back and forth holding placards that say things like:

"TECHNOLOGY FOR PEOPLE"

"SPECIALIZATION MEANS ALIENATION"

"IF SUNBEAMS WERE WEAPONS OF WAR,
WE WOULD HAVE HAD SOLAR ENERGY
CENTURIES AGO."

PAM (O.S.)

I've always felt that way, too.
Haven't you?

DAVID

looks a bit uneasy.

DAVID

Where is this?

PAM

I don't know.

ON THE T.V.

A side door of the building opens and someone steps nervously into the crowd. It's LEON. He's trying to slip through inconspicuously.

DAVID

spots him and draws a breath.

ON THE T.V.

One of the protesters turns suddenly and his placard catches LEON in the side of the head, knocking him down. The camera zooms in closer as LEON scrambles to his feet.

DAVID AND PAM

PAM
That's Leon! Look!

David is frozen.

ON THE T.V.

LEON awkwardly maneouvers out of view of the camera.

DAVID AND PAM

PAM
That was him wasn't it?

DAVID
Aw, no. It kind of looked like him, but you couldn't really tell. I'm sure it's not. Hey the water should be boiling by now.

INT. KITCHEN

DAVID drops coffee into a filter funnel and picks up the steaming kettle. You can tell he's preoccupied-- so much so that he's about to pour the hot water into the funnel with no pot underneath.

The hot water dribbles through onto his stocking feet.

DAVID
Owch! Shit!

PAM (O.S.)
You alright?

DAVID
Yeah. It's okay.
(He stands there
gritting his teeth,
trying to calm
down)

DISSOLVE TO:

PLANS ON A DRAFTING BOARD

INT. LEON'S BASEMENT WORKSHOP - EVENING

LEON is working at a drafting table. DAVID is unloading a box of metal plates.

On LEON'S workbench-- an odd assortment of tools and gadgets.

Along one wall-- brand new table saw, metal lathe, and drill press. The tiny window near the ceiling has been boarded over.

DAVID looks at one of the completed schematics. He takes it over to LEON.

DAVID

This is going to be a problem.
There's no way we can machine
this-- and this--
(Pointing)

LEON

You're right. I can get into the
physics department machining room
to do those.

PAM'S VOICE

(Muffled but
penetrating)
Leon! Telephone!

DAVID and LEON look expectant.

LEON

That'll be them for sure.
(Heads for the stairs)

CUT TO:

INT. LIVING ROOM - EVENING

as LEON goes to the phone. PAM sits nearby with the Classifieds strewn all over and covered with pen marks. The door to her bedroom is open, and inside it's a mess.

LEON

(Into phone)
Leon Watts speaking.
(MORE)

CONTINUED:

LEON (CONT'D)

(He listens carefully,
while resting his
hand on PAM'S
shoulder)

Yes. That's good.

(He hangs up, pauses)

PAM flips her small front wheels up into the air and balances way back on the large back wheels only. She looks quite safe and at ease in this precarious position.

LEON

Hey, how many times do I have to tell you that's physically impossible? I should know.

PAM smiles. LEON picks up a pamphlet that's resting on her lap. The title reads:

"APPROPRIATE TECHNOLOGY-- FREEDOM
FOR THE MODERN MAN"

LEON

I didn't know you were into this.

PAM

Yeah. They want to decentralize everything, like solar power instead of nuclear--

LEON

I know.

(Shrugging it off)

It'll never happen.

PAM

I don't know about that. But that's not the point anyways. You are what you act on.

LEON

Um. Well, that's not always so clear...

PAM

I'm going to one of their meetings tonight, wanna come?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

LEON

Oh, no, I'm afraid I've got too many pigmalians to parlez-vous right now.

(He's heading for the basement door)

PAM watches after him with a look of affection.

INT. BASEMENT - DAVID AND LEON

as LEON comes down the stairs.

LEON

It's all set. They want to check the plutonium tonight.

DAVID

Good. It's about time.

CUT TO:

EXT. BEACH - WORLD WAR II BUNKER - TWILIGHT

On the beach below the University sand cliffs stands a two-story concrete sentinel from the past-- an army bunker built in fear of Japanese invaders.

Waves lap against the rocks below.

INT. BUNKER - DAVID AND LEON

At the top, the bunker is open, to the front and to the back. LEON and DAVID lean out the front, silhouetted by the downtown lights and the full moon. On the floor of the bunker is a rusted cannon mount.

DAVID

That T.V. accident is really haunting me, you know.

LEON

It's okay, believe me.

DAVID

Are you sure?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

LEON

Positive. Cross my heart.
Cross my whole cardiovascular
system, even.

(He turns to look
out back)

The bunker walls have layer upon layer of colorful graffiti. Angry splotches, initials, and hateful words cover older layers of psychedelic colors and peace symbols.

Outside, a light blinks on and off. We can make out someone coming down the steep trail behind the bunker. LEON signals back with his own flashlight.

There are two men-- AMBROSE, and what looks like "The Wolfman". They stop at the base of the bunker.

AMBROSE

Trick or treat! I'm coming up!

The WOLFMAN waits behind as AMBROSE climbs the metal rungs inside the tower and emerges through a hole in the bunker floor.

AMBROSE faces LEON and DAVID.

AMBROSE

Hello, David, I'm pleased to make
your acquaintance.
(They shake)

AMBROSE takes out a pair of halloween masks.

AMBROSE

Here's your masks. Our helper
wants to remain anonymous too,
as you've seen.

They examine the masks. They are very realistic rubber masks with hair and everything, made to cover the whole head. LEON'S is an orangutan. DAVID'S is a chimpanzee with bulging eyes.

LEON

Great. A terrorist with a
sense of humour.

AMBROSE

You know, you needn't fear that
I'll steal the plutonium. I'd
have to pay someone to build the
bomb anyway. But I respect your
wanting to keep it hidden.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DAVID is standing by the ladder-hole, wearing the chimp's head.

DAVID
Let's get going then, eh?
(He looks nervous,
and, of course,
ridiculous)

LEON dons his orangutan mask and goes to the ladder.
The wise-but-impish look of the orangutan suits him.

AMBROSE plays his light over the graffiti.

AMBROSE
This was built against the Japanese
wasn't it?

DAVID
Yeah.

AMBROSE
There's a lot of history in here.
Shall I sign our names?

CUT TO:

EXT. ROADSIDE - NIGHT

as the WOLFMAN, flanked by a CHIMP and an ORANGUTAN,
emerges from the woods and heads for LEON'S parked car.

The WOLFMAN carries a geiger counter and a satchel.

They arrive at the car. DAVID opens the trunk and they
put the equipment inside.

DAVID
(To WOLFMAN)
You, too, please.

The WOLFMAN looks at them.

DAVID
Please. There'll be plenty of
air.

Reluctantly, the WOLFMAN gets into the trunk, and they
close it.

CUT TO:

EXT. STANLEY PARK - BRIDGE ENTRANCE - NIGHT

LEON'S car heads toward the bridge that crosses from Stanley Park, across the inlet, to the North Shore mountains.

But just before the bridge, the car swerves off onto a side road that winds around the park peninsula.

CUT TO:

IN THE WOODS

The car speeds expertly along the side road.

There's a few turns, then it stops at another turnoff, beside another car.

LEON and DAVID jump out and quickly get the WOLFMAN out of the trunk and transfer him to the trunk of the other car, which they get in, and they're off again.

CUT TO:

EXT. THE HIGHWAY - LEON'S CAR - NIGHT

To establish.

INT. CAR - DAVID AND LEON

Their masks are off now.

DAVID drives, and LEON moves his fingers along a path drawn in red on a map of Vancouver and the mountains north of it.

The red path leaves Vancouver, winds crazily through miles of road outside the city, then returns and stops in West Vancouver, at an "X" drawn about halfway up the side of Hollyburn mountain.

LEON

Make a left here.

They turn left. LEON passes coffee to DAVID.

DAVID

Thanks.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

LEON

You know, you haven't told me what you're planning to do with your share.

(He pours rum into his coffee)

DAVID

Well, you still plan to set up your own research center, don't you? Continue your experiment?

LEON

Of course.

(Then suddenly
ironical)

Nothing but the most noble intentions from Leon Watts, yessirree. Which just goes to show, you can't judge a man by his actions...

DAVID

Seriously though. You do plan to don't you?

LEON

Yup. After the heat has died down of course. Maybe I'll have to disguise it as a Bolivian worm farm...

DAVID

Well-- I'm thinking I might like to help you with it.

LEON

Really? That's great, David. I'd really like that.

(Pause)

I bet you'd have a way with worms.

CUT TO:

EXT. WOODS - TWO APES AND A WOLFMAN

In the ghostly light of a full moon through towering evergreens, they follow LEON'S light along a trail. DAVID guides the WOLFMAN, who is blindfolded. We can just get a glimpse of the city lights in the b.g. across the water.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

They turn off the trail and plunge into the wet, thick underbrush.

The WOLFMAN huffs and grunts. Stumbles a few times.

Then finally they stop in a small clearing. DAVID crosses to the other side.

In the hollow of the roots of a large douglas fir, DAVID fishes out a small suitcase. He opens it, revealing the glass vials with their lumps of plutonium.

DAVID

They look so harmless.

The WOLFMAN'S blindfold is removed. He looks around, but there's nothing to see beyond the spot of light trained on the plutonium.

The WOLFMAN sets to work as they watch. He takes out one of the lumps, takes a reading with the gieger counter, tests its hardness and weight, and so on. DAVID and LEON stand together, silent.

The WOLFMAN keeps glancing toward them. Now he shifts his body so that for a moment he blocks the plutonium from their view. We see him pull a lump of something from under the neck of his mask and slip it into the vial in place of the real plutonium.

LEON

(Sees the switch)

Hey!

LEON lunges at the WOLFMAN, who jumps back, tenses, and throws the plutonium-- it disappears into the bushes.

DAVID

What the--

DAVID follows the plutonium into the bushes, as LEON goes for the WOLFMAN.

A racoon in the bushes is startled by a rolling lump.

The lumbering ORANGUTAN struggles with the snarling WOLFMAN.

The wide-eyed CHIMP paws through the bushes.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

The ORANGUTAN rips off the head of the WOLFMAN and throws him to the ground. The ORANGUTAN stares in shock at what is revealed:

LEON

Pinnock!

The cornered racoon hisses at the groping hand of the CHIMP and lashes at it with its claws.

DAVID

Yeoww!

The CHIMP leaps about in pain and terror.

DR. PINNOCK jumps up and pulls the head off the distracted ORANGUTAN.

PINNOCK

Hah! Watts! Leon Watts, the noble young idealist!

LEON is in shock, but not enough to stop him from grabbing PINNOCK again and forcing him down with his arms behind him.

The CHIMP finally retrieves the lump. Gingerly, trembling, he brings it back to put in the vial.

PINNOCK

(Pinned to the ground)

Nothing but a common criminal!

We can see LEON doesn't know quite how to react. DAVID brings a rope and ties PINNOCK'S hands together.

DAVID

(Removes the mask)

They're trying to steal the plutonium after all!

PINNOCK

No they aren't-- I wanted it for myself!

(They let him up)

It's weapons grade, alright. Where did you get it? How did you get it?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DAVID

How can you call him a common criminal? Huh?

(He grabs PINNOCK by the hair)

LEON

(To DAVID)

Don't.

DAVID

(To PINNOCK)

It's people like you who drove him to this!

PINNOCK

(Snears)

Drove him to it, eh?

(Pause)

They blackmailed me to make them a bomb. But I couldn't get any plutonium... And then I came to realize just how much I wanted the chance.

(A piercing stare at LEON)

We all want power, don't we Dr. Watts? You almost had me fooled.

LEON

Look--

(But he can't finish)

There's a tense pause.

DAVID

Listen, asshole, if anything happens to us, or to the plutonium-- anything-- we can easily arrange for the terrorists to know what you just tried to pull off! Understand?

LEON

(Gets up)

Let's go.

DAVID gets PINNOCK roughly to his feet, and blindfolds him again, while LEON puts away the plutonium.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

They cross the clearing and into the underbrush.

ON THE TRAIL

DAVID leads with PINNOCK. LEON falls behind a little.

LEON

We hold on his face for a few moments. He looks grim.

And now MUSIC STARTS-- slow, repetitive, and very soft, maybe a guitar. It's an ambient music that will easily carry us through the next few scenes. And just after it starts, we

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. LEON'S BASEMENT - DIM LIGHT

Metal filings litter the floor. A lot of the mechanical parts have been made now, and they're scattered over the workbench.

But what captures our attention is a thick metal casing, half formed, that rests in the center of the workbench like a sleeping grizzly bear-- the bomb housing.

CLOSER

and we see, just above the bomb housing, a calendar with a schedule marked out on it in large, bold print, something like this: A few blank days, then-- "PINNOCK INSPECT". Another few days and-- "KILN BUILT". A day or so later and-- "GET PLUTONIUM". Followed by-- MOULD PLUTONIUM". And finally-- "READY". "X"s mark off past days, closing in on "PINNOCK INSPECT".

LEON'S VOICE OVER
And so the valiant Leon Watts--

QUICK DISSOLVE TO:

INT. PHYSICS DEPT. METALWORK SHOP - NIGHT

Bright. A gigantic room full of big machines. As we scan the room we continue to hear LEON's voice O.S., over the music and the whir and clank of a machine we can't see yet.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

LEON (O.S.)

(Continuing)

-- now puts his talents to work
for the benefit of all mankind!

(Pause)

Could this really be happening,
Ladies and Gentlemen?

LEON is into view now, right in front of us, machining
a large piece of metal and talking to himself.

LEON

(Looks up)

Or is it only a bad dream?

From his odd look, it seems he's seriously considering
the question. He turns the machine off and sits down.

Very still.

LEON pinches himself in the arm. He slaps himself in
the face.

After a blank moment, he turns his head quickly, and on
that turn, we

DISSOLVE RAPIDLY TO:

INT. LEON'S BASEMENT - NIGHT

as LEON finishes a quick turn of his head, looking toward
none other than DR. PINNOCK, who is hunched over the com-
pleted bomb mechanism, inspecting the insides.

LEON looks different-- because yes, this is really happening
alright. And it's hard to read his face, it's pretty hard-
set, but perhaps there's a little shame there.

PINNOCK looks at the plans beside him, makes a note, looks
back at LEON with the kind of smirk you might give to a
respected enemy. LEON'S expression doesn't change.

DAVID

nearby, watches LEON and PINNOCK with concern, then gets
up.

CUT TO:

INT. LIVING ROOM - LIGHTS OUT - NIGHT

DAVID flicks on the yard lights. He walks back and forth peeking out of the curtains, just being cautious.

PAM watches him curiously. As she wheels over closer to DAVID, he backs into her. Startled, he whirls, grabs the curtain as he falls, and rips it from its supports. And on that action we

CUT TO:

EXT. LEON'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Looking through the window of the house next door.

Someone is beside us, watching LEON'S house with binoculars, as we see DAVID over there, trying to fix the curtain.

The person lowers the binoculars and now we can see that it's AMBROSE'S ASSISTANT. And next to him we can recognize a couple of the Zarathustrian people.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. PAWNSHOP - SUNNY DAY

We look in the window and see DAVID inside at the counter. He's testing out a multi-band shortwave receiver. Looks pleased, gets the man to pack it for him.

CUT TO:

EXT. THE STREET - DAY

as DAVID walks back toward his car, parked way down the street. A nondescript man in jeans and ski jacket stands by the curb with his back to DAVID as DAVID approaches.

CLOSEUP - MAN

We see him writing down telephone pole numbers on a B.C. Telephone Company form. DAVID passes, and the man steps around the pole and heads for the next one.

WITH DAVID

DAVID glances back and sees the man following.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

After a moment, he glances back again and now the man appears to be hiding behind a telephone pole.

DAVID looks uneasy. When he looks back again, the man is behind the next pole.

DAVID quickens his pace. Looking back again, the man is behind the next pole!

DAVID runs across to the other side of the street, almost getting run over in the process.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. LEON'S UPSTAIRS BATHROOM - THE WINDOW - MORNING

Very foggy this morning. The neighborhood fades off into a limbo of grey mist. We hear static and distorted voices mingling with the ambient music. They say things like:

VOICES (FILTER)

Unit six here. Reporting a one-
oh-nine-er at Sixteenth and
Hemlock...

DAVID is lying up to his ears in the steaming bathtub, relaxing. The voices come from the shortwave radio sitting beside him, and they're mainly police broadcasts.

Now an odd knocking sound comes to DAVID through the pipes. He tenses, listening.

DAVID gets up and wraps a towel around himself, looks out the window.

Down below, near one of the basement windows, we can just see the head and shoulders of a man tampering with something.

DAVID is scared. He must take action.

CUT TO:

EXT. HOUSE - BASEMENT WINDOW

The meter man from B.C. Hydro has finished reading the meter. He gets up and walks away, and just as he's left we see, in the b.g., two naked feet dangle down into the frame.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Then a crazed, half naked, soaking wet DAVID-- with a pistol in his hand-- leaps to the ground. He hits too hard, falls flat on top of the gun, but quickly scrambles up. He looks about frantically.

A paunchy, middle aged MAN in a new jogging suit plods by on the sidewalk. On seeing DAVID he stops in his tracks.

MAN

(Afraid, but trying
to soothe this
maniac)

Hey now. Everything's alright.
(He backs off, starts
to run)
Everything's okay!

The MAN sprints off, probably faster than he ever thought he could do.

DAVID rushes back around the house.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. LEON'S HOUSE - ANOTHER DAY - POURING RAIN

To establish, and now the soft music finally dies away.

INT. BASEMENT

We can hear the rain beating on the ground outside the boarded up windows. An enclosure of bricks has been built up around a kiln and a small table, which we can see inside the enclosure through a large square hole in its top. Rubber gloves are fitted into an opening in the side.

The calendar is marked off up to the end of "KILN BUILT".

DAVID sits on a stool, slumped over onto the workbench, snoring. Bricks and globs of fresh mortar are scattered around, and DAVID'S hands and face are dirty. He's obviously taking an impromptu nap after some strenuous work.

We hear footsteps, then the basement door opens and LEON clumps down the stairs.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

LEON sets a package down on the workbench, then goes over to DAVID and shakes his shoulder a little.

DAVID jumps up, startled, 'till he realizes what's happening.

LEON

(Wryly)

Want a surprise?

DAVID

I'm full, thanks.

LEON

Watts and Freidman Atom Bombs Incorporated are hosting an anti-nuclear conference tonight.

DAVID

What?

LEON

Pam just called. Her Appropriate Technology group needs a meeting place tonight and she invited them here.

DAVID

What!

CUT TO:

INT. LEON'S LIVING ROOM - APPROPRIATE TECH. GROUP - NIGHT

A dozen or so people of varying ages are crammed into the living room. Most of them look bright and concerned. One MAN stands, speaking passionately.

MAN

Okay, so the threat of nuclear war comes mainly from the energy crisis. Now, the U.S. imported only fifteen percent of its oil at the start of the crisis, and now it imports fifty percent--

In the b.g., just down the hall, we see PAM knocking on the basement door.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CHAIRMAN

I must interrupt. The topic tonight is nuclear power, and we're getting off on a tangent.

CUT TO:

INT. BASEMENT DOORWAY - LEON AND PAM - NIGHT

LEON stands at the top of the stairs, holding the door open partway to talk to PAM. He looks uneasy.

PAM

Just for a few minutes?
How about just a few questions?

ACROSS THE BASEMENT - DAVID

There's a pane of glass sealing over the kiln enclosure opening now, and DAVID is trying out the rubber gloves to make sure they reach okay. Clay cups sit inside, ready for the moulding process.

LEON (O.S.)

I can't really leave my experiment right now...

DAVID looks toward the stairs.

BACK TO PAM AND LEON

PAM

(Kind of hurt)

This is important to me, Leon.
Don't you care?

A strand of PAM'S hair has fallen across her face and she can't move it because she's supporting herself on the door frame. LEON gently moves the strand back and tucks it behind her ear. Looks at her.

CUT TO:

INT. LIVING ROOM - THE GROUP - NIGHT

A PYRAMID NUT stands before the disconcerted group with a wire pyramid on his head. He is removing smaller metallic pyramids from his attache case as he speaks.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

PYRAMID NUT

(Hyper)

-- but as well as supplying
renewable energy and psychological
well-being, it's an "appropriate
technology", don't you see?

Hostile remarks from the group-- "Who is this guy?",
"Get him out of here!", "This is a serious meeting,
damnit!"-- and one of the group members escorts the
PYRAMID NUT out of the house.

EXT. LEON'S HOUSE - WIDE SHOT - THE NUT - NIGHT

The PYRAMID NUT stands on the porch. He pauses, then
heads down the stairs, with the wire pyramid still on
his head.

EXT. HOUSE NEXT DOOR - WINDOW - MAN WITH BINOCULARS

The observer lowers his binoculars, stares, and calls
to someone. Another person arrives and takes the
binoculars for a look.

CUT TO:

BACK TO THE BASEMENT STAIRS - LEON AND PAM

LEON

(Calling)

David?

DAVID comes up the stairs.

LEON

I'll be back in a few minutes.

DAVID

Yeah.

LEON goes out.

DAVID locks the door behind LEON and sits down on the
stairs. And as we watch him, we get the feeling that
maybe he's starting to crack. Just a hairline fracture,
maybe, but it's there.

CUT TO:

INT. LIVING ROOM - GROUP AND LEON

LEON sits in PAM'S racing wheelchair. The group is attentive and friendly.

GROUP MEMBER

What do you think should be done about developing countries that can now acquire nuclear warheads?

LEON

Well I... I'm afraid you probably know more about that than I do.

PAM

Leon? Do you feel there is as much danger of accidental explosions or of thefts of radioactive material as we have been led to believe?

LEON

Um...

(Pause)

To be perfectly honest, yes. Yes I do. I think-- I think your coalition is a good example to the world to care more about the dangers to human life, and living. And I would say that nuclear safety is-- is a primary target for concern.

There's mutterings of "Aha...!", "Hmm, I thought so...", from the group.

We see subtle signs from LEON that give away his distress, his terrible feelings of hypocrisy.

ANOTHER GROUP MEMBER

Dr. Watts, er, Leon, could you tell us just what the security procedures might be, say, at a nuclear power plant, or research lab?

CUT TO:

EXT. HOLLYBURN MOUNTAIN - EARLY MORNING

as LEON'S car crawls like an insect up the long steep stretch of highway that winds up the side of the mountain.

INT. CAR - LEON AND DAVID

No talk. A little strained.

CUT TO:

POV FROM ANOTHER CAR

Through a volkswagen windshield we see LEON'S car way up ahead. The driver of this car has shoulder length blond hair.

SIDE ANGLE - THE DRIVER

Well wouldn't you know it-- it's PINNOCK. Camouflaged.

CUT TO:

EXT. THE SECRET CLEARING IN THE WOODS

The sun evaporates the dampness, and some kind of insects are mating in the steaming air.

The bushes rustle, and LEON and DAVID emerge. DAVID heads for the suitcase. LEON is unusually subdued.

DAVID notices something a little ways off through the trees. He hoists himself up on a branch to get a better view.

DAVID'S POV

A clearing has been bulldozed only a hundred feet away, an ugly scar through the rain forest. A caterpillar tractor sits at the side with its huge scoop up in the air like a rearing beast.

BACK TO SCENE

DAVID

(Dropping down)

Holy shit! They're building
another road right over there.
Christ!

(He gets the suitcase)

No one will be there now, on a
Sunday, but let's get it quick.

Before he can open the suitcase, LEON puts his hand over the latch.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

LEON

I don't know about this anymore,
David.

(He sits on the
suitcase)

DAVID

(Regards LEON for a
moment)

Look, of course we're going to
be scared. I'm freaked out too--
but, shit, we can't stop now,
after we've gone this far. We're
almost done!

LEON

It's not that.

DAVID

What do you mean?

LEON

I've been thinking about what
this bomb might be used for.

DAVID

It won't work.

LEON

Of course. But the ransom, or
threat, or whatever they use it
for, could be just as bad.

DAVID

Yeah, well... That's probably
true. But we chose to do this.
If we hadn't, someone else would
have--

LEON

I just don't know that I can
justify that anymore.

DAVID

Well what about the money for
your experiment? In this case
the end justifies the means.

LEON

I don't know about that anymore,
either.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DAVID

Look. If we ditch this thing
now, when it's all ready, what
do you think they'll do to us?
They'll kill us for sure!

CUT TO:

EXT. THE BULLDOZED CLEARING - PINNOCK

From a concealed vantage point at the edge of the clearing, DR. PINNOCK watches them with binoculars.

PINNOCK lowers the binoculars and turns toward the large caterpillar. The raised scoop towers over PINNOCK as he reaches down behind the treads and pulls out a rifle with telescopic sight and silencer.

In front of the caterpillar, he rests himself against the mound of earth at the edge of the clearing and sights through the rifle sight at LEON and DAVID.

EXT. SECRET CLEARING - DAVID AND LEON

as LEON makes a gesture of submission.

LEON

Okay. Okay. Our hands are tied.
Let's go.

They take out the plutonium vials.

THROUGH THE RIFLE SIGHT - DAVID AND LEON

The cross hairs center on LEON

But LEON moves out of sight to return the suitcase.

The cross hairs shift to DAVID, as he puts the plutonium vials into a small backpack.

EXT. BULLDOZED CLEARING - BEHIND PINNOCK

as he readies to fire.

Now in the f.g., to our surprise, a gloved hand with a gun raises into frame, pointing at PINNOCK'S back.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

PINNOCK lowers the rifle for a moment to make an adjustment, and the pistol in the f.g. lowers out of sight again.

PINNOCK raises the rifle once more.

There's a loud clank from the caterpillar and PINNOCK turns just in time to see the scoop come crashing down on top of him.

The scoop sinks into the earth, completely entombing PINNOCK.

EXT. SECRET CLEARING - DAVID AND LEON

as they turn toward the sound.

EXT. BULLDOZED CLEARING - AMBROSE

These underworld types can keep close tabs on things, it seems. And intervene when needed.

AMBROSE snatches up PINNOCK'S rifle and slips off into the forest.

We can't tell whether PINNOCK is dead or just trapped.

LEON arrives at the edge of the clearing, peers cautiously through the trees. He sees the fallen scoop and looks relieved.

LEON
(Calling as he turns
back)

It's okay!

A robin flutters down into the clearing, hops up onto the scoop, jerks its head this way and that, and hops back to the ground again in search of worms.

CUT TO:

INT. BASEMENT - LEON AND DAVID AT KILN - DAY

DAVID watches closely as LEON carefully lifts a clay container from the hot kiln with tongs, moves it over to one of the hemispheric cups, and starts pouring out the molten plutonium.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Steam grows on the glass. DAVID pushes a button and windshield wipers wipe the glass clear inside. The police band receiver crackles and chatters in the b.g. as usual.

Both hemispheres are half filled now and they need time to solidify. LEON sits back and breathes freely again. He crosses out another day on the calendar, in the middle of "MOULD PLUTONIUM".

DAVID

How long do we wait?

LEON

Six hours.

CUT TO:

INT. LIVING ROOM - LEON AND PAM - A FEW HOURS LATER

PAM is lying face down on the couch while LEON gives her a backrub. She purrs at the sensual pleasure of it, and LEON'S fingers get more and more intimate.

The television is on. Something on it captures LEON'S attention.

ON THE T.V.

a shakey camera follows stretchers of injured people being carried past us, in the street of some South or Central American town. Smoke billows from the jungle nearby.

NEWS VOICE OVER

The terrorists say that they are prepared to hold the embassy hostages for another year if need be, until their demands are met.

Cut to a newscaster.

NEWSCASTER

Soviet leaders today called the attempted rescue of the hostages, quote, an insane act of war against an underprivileged country.

CLICK! And there's just the dwindling dot on the screen.

ANGLE

LEON is by the television, turning back to sit beside PAM again. PAM is maneuvering herself into a sitting position, and LEON helps her a bit.

PAM

Mmm, thanks, that was great.

LEON is holding her shoulders. There's a definite, inevitable look between them now and PAM leans into LEON more. Their faces are close, and PAM really wants a kiss, but no, she doesn't get one-- LEON has all of a sudden backed off. He's never seemed awkward like this before.

PAM

(Motivated)

Leon.

And she pulls him back over to her. But what he does is to hug her tightly, their heads over each other's shoulders. PAM pushes LEON back a bit and, finally, they kiss-- both wanting it, both feeling strongly for each other but again LEON breaks away from her. And of course it's worse this time.

LEON

Pam, I... I can't. I want to but... but it just won't work out.

A heavy pause. Then PAM gets mad. She yanks her wheelchair over to her and hoists herself into it.

PAM

Oh, sure! I know why! I know exactly why!

LEON

What do you mean?

PAM

(Starting to leave)

Because I'm disabled! You're just another one of those superficial jerks who--

LEON

No!

(He grabs her arm)

Please, it's not that! Believe me, Pam.

(His sincerity holds her)

(MORE)

CONTINUED:

LEON (CONT'D)

It's just something-- I can't tell you about. It would-- change your view of me. I-- I have to think things over for awhile. Okay?

(PAM doesn't know
how to react)

Be patient with me. Please?

He's down on his knees and she can't deny him. She tries to feel calm.

LEON sits on the edge of the couch, tense.

LEON

Let me ask you-- what if you needed to hurt some people, in order to benefit everyone, ten times as much, later on? Would it be right?

PAM

(Still off balance,
as you can imagine)
Well-- do those people agree to it?

LEON

No.

PAM

Then how do you have the right to decide for them?

LEON sits back, troubled.

PAM

Shit, Leon, what are you on about?

Now DAVID enters briskly with a newspaper, stops beside LEON and sticks it in front of him.

DAVID

(Anxious but trying
to hide it)
Look at this. Your friend Doctor Pinnock has mysteriously disappeared.

LEON stares at the article.

CUT TO:

BACK IN THE BASEMENT

DAVID paces and LEON stares numbly at the kiln enclosure.

DAVID

Maybe he's in on something with them! They could be tricking us! Or maybe he found out about our plan and he's told them. Or maybe he's turning us in to the police and they're keeping him safe 'till we're caught!

LEON

No, he'd be in too much trouble from the terrorists if he did that.

DAVID

Well I don't know! I just don't know anymore. Things are getting weird!

LEON

Maybe they killed him for some reason.

DAVID

That could be it. Yeah. And they could just as easily kill us now and take the bomb!

(Pause)

I don't know. Holy shit.

LEON goes to DAVID and holds him steady by the shoulders.

LEON

Remember what you said on the mountain?

(DAVID nods
reluctantly)

We're locked into this thing and we've got to play it through.

(He turns away and
goes back to the
kiln)

Damnit I don't even want this anymore, even if it all works out!

LEON places the plutonium moulds onto finely calibrated weighing scales inside the enclosure.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

LEON

Turn on the kiln, please. Same temperature.

Through the rubber gloves, LEON removes the kiln lid and places the remaining plutonium, in a container, into the kiln.

DAVID

I'm going for a walk.

They exchange the kind of looks you might see from cornered soldiers during a siege. LEON nods.

After DAVID leaves, LEON picks up two tiny cubes of something with the tongs, and places one in the center of each of the two half-filled hemispheres. These are the false pieces that will make the bomb impotent.

CUT TO:

EXT. LEON'S HOUSE - DAY

Quiet street, birds chirp, a van is parked across the street.

INT. THE VAN

Three R.C.M.P. officers are inside. One looks through the one-way window of the van. He's watching the house next door to LEON'S. Yes, definitely the house next door. And now out of that house comes one of the cult members.

OFFICER

Here he comes.

EXT. LEON'S HOUSE

as DAVID comes out, and down the steps.

He turns at the sidewalk and walks in the direction of next door, passing the cult member, who is walking in the opposite direction.

INT. VAN

as one of the cops raises a microphone to his mouth.

CUT TO:

INT. BASEMENT

LEON takes his hands out of the rubber gloves, just as he hears:

POLICE BAND RADIO
The suspect is leaving the house.
(LEON stiffens)
He's heading toward Alma Street.
Alert unit B.

LEON jumps up-- what should he do?

Frantically, but without losing his head, he turns off the kiln, reaches in with the gloves again, and carefully but swiftly places the two formed hemispheres into a case. Then the unmelted plutonium, too.

CUT TO:

EXT. STREET - DAVID

It's starting to rain, and DAVID is jogging back home before he gets too wet.

In a moment, he's back at the house. We watch him enter, and then we hold, on the house, on the stillness.

CUT TO:

INT. BASEMENT - LEON AND DAVID

DAVID
Oh shit! Oh God! I knew it!

LEON
(Sternly)
Get the plans and the spare parts and we'll put them in the case with the plutonium, and then help me move it and the bomb out the back way to the car.

DAVID
But you can't--

LEON
Just hurry!

LEON is about to lift the glass top off the protective brick enclosure.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DAVID

Wait! What about the fumes?
There'll be some atoms left over!

LEON

(He pauses. He seems
calm now, resigned
to fate.)

Maybe. Maybe I won't ingest them.
We'll just have to wait a few
years and see if I get bone
cancer.

(He looks like he
wants to be poisoned.
He reaches for the
glass, raises it a
foot, and just as
he does--)

MEGAPHONE VOICE

(Distant but loud)
This is the police! You are
completely surrounded! Do not
attempt to flee or resist!

LEON and DAVID freeze.

DAVID starts to break down. Tears in his eyes, and he
slams his fist into the wall.

DAVID

No!

(Like a scared, hurt
child)

LEON just has a frozen, wide-eyed, grim stare.

CUT TO:

EXT. HOUSE NEXT DOOR - POLICE RAID

Police cars flank the house, lights flashing. Cops with
guns drawn stand at the ready as two of them enter the
front door of the house.

AMBROSE'S ASSISTANT, sneaking out the back way, is stopped
by a cop's gun levelled at his heart.

The cop with the megaphone is out by the van.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MEGAPHONE

I repeat! Do not attempt to
resist!

Across the way, at LEON'S house, we see PAM peeking out
the window to see what's the commotion.

CUT TO:

INT. LEON'S LIVING ROOM - DAVID AND LEON

as the two emerge fearfully from the basement. DAVID
already has his hands raised.

LEON pauses at the front door, turns to PAM. It looks
like he wants to say something, but no, he turns away,
opens the door carefully, and steps out with his hands
up.

EXT. LEON'S HOUSE AND NEXT DOOR - WIDE SHOT

We see LEON step out onto his porch, pathetic looking with
his hands up like that.

The ASSISTANT is being shoved into one of the cop cars
while another cop covers three cult members huddling
together on the front porch, and the rest of the cops
ransack the house.

LEON'S arms drop. He rushes back into the house, bumping
into DAVID, who is just emerging behind him, and scaring
the shit out of DAVID. The door closes.

CUT TO:

INT. LEON'S LIVING ROOM

PAM stares at DAVID, flattened against the wall, and LEON
standing frozen in the middle of the room.

DAVID

What the--

LEON

Look.

LEON pulls DAVID over to the window beside PAM and they
look out. The neighborhood is gathering now, cautiously.
Peeking out their windows.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

PAM, of course, keeps watching LEON and DAVID. Mainly LEON.

DAVID
(Profoundly)
Holy shit...

LEON avoids PAM'S look. He obviously can't face her.

CUT TO:

EXT. CITY LIGHTS - NIGHT

A police siren can be distinctly heard, beneath the chirping of the crickets.

CUT TO:

INT. AN OFFICE - AMBROSE AND THE HEAD PRIEST

HEAD PRIEST
(Uptight)
How can the police be on to us?

AMBROSE
They aren't. My assistant's record just caught up with him that's all...

HEAD PRIEST
Well we're associated with him now.

AMBROSE
... I've got a lawyer who'll get him off.

HEAD PRIEST
Why did you use my disciples?

AMBROSE
He did. Dumb asshole, he'll be back doing B&E's when I get done with him.

HEAD PRIEST
You know if this falls through--

AMBROSE
Just cool down, Your Holiness. Watts will come through in a couple of days.

CUT TO:

INT. LEON'S LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

LEON is sprawled in the armchair with a bottle of rum beside him, watching PAM glance through a magazine. LEON'S been drinking the rum straight, and he's drunk to the point of slurring his speech.

LEON pulls back the curtain and gazes out at the night.

LEON

There's a ring around the moon tonight. And you know what that means...

PAM

What?

LEON

(Slowly)

It means... that abberation is the hallmark of homosapiens, while longanimous placability and condonation are the indicia of supramundane omniscience.

(He's had to work at the words, and he's pleased he did it)

PAM

(Thinks for a second)

To err is human; to forgive, divine!

LEON

(Surprised)

How did you know?

PAM

We did those things in high school. Good memory, huh?

LEON

(Seeing PAM through a fog)

I really love you, Pam.

A pause, and PAM wheels over to LEON hesitantly.

LEON rubs his hand back and forth on PAM'S leg. It's affection, but it's also a nervous action.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

LEON
(Continuing)
I do. I know that for sure--
But--
(His eyes won't stay
open)
I'm very confused...

PAM
(She cradles LEON'S
head)
Please tell me. What is it?

LEON looks like he wants to cry. He hugs PAM feebly, can't quite manage, slumps back deep into the armchair again, eyes closed.

PAM throws her magazine across the room. This is really getting to her.

CUT TO:

INT. BASEMENT - DAVID

Sweating and agitated. DAVID is trying to complete the moulding process himself.

The mould sits on a scale and he's trying to pour in exactly the right amount and flatten the top, just over the little cubes inside, but it's all going wrong.

Frustrated, he pulls his hands out of the rubber gloves and gets up.

CUT TO:

INT. LIVING ROOM - LEON AND PAM

as DAVID enters and approaches LEON.

DAVID
Leon?
(LEON'S eyes flicker
open)
Listen, I can't do the last phase
myself. You've got to do it.
(Pause)
Leon? We've got to finish this
now.
(But LEON has passed
out)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DAVID
Shit.

PAM
What's wrong?

DAVID
Um-- nothing. It's okay.

CUT TO:

INT. LEON'S BEDROOM UPSTAIRS - LEON - NIGHT

Sgnogghh...! Sgnogghh...! LEON snores deeply, draped over his bed, with his clothes still on.

DAVID

lies on a fold-out bed across from LEON. He is staring up at the ceiling with sleepless eyes, and with huge wads of cotton stuffed in his ears.

CUT TO:

INT. LIVING ROOM - THE T.V. - NIGHT

A 1940's romantic melodrama is on. Across, we can see PAM in the bathroom, through the open door.

PAM IN THE BATHROOM

She's just had a bath and wears only a towel.

At the mirror, she tries out various sorts of makeup, which is something she hardly ever uses. She's just trying some subtle touches that's all.

Then for a solid moment she scrutinizes her image, seems to approve, holds her breasts with her hands and turns her head from front on, to three quarter view, to profile.

CUT TO:

INT. LIVING ROOM - A MINUTE OR TWO LATER

as PAM wheels over beside the T.V. and plugs her hair dryer into the overloaded extension cord.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

She waits for a break in the movie dialogue, then turns on the dryer.

After a moment of blowing her hair-- blink!-- all the power goes out and it's suddenly awfully dark.

PAM is startled, then worried. She goes to the stairway that leads up to LEON'S bedroom.

PAM
(Calling)
David?
(Pause)
Da-vid!

No answer. She's going to have to fix this herself.

CUT TO:

A SHORT TIME LATER

PAM is dressed, and carries a flashlight. She goes to the basement door-- it's unlocked.

Carefully, she grabs hold of the door knob and doorway frame and with her strong arms, pulls herself out of her chair and onto the floor.

Her legs have buckled under her. She tugs at them, finally placing them onto the top stair.

Now, she begins to painstakingly lower herself down the stairs, one at a time.

INT. BASEMENT

We can follow her progress by the erratic beam from the flashlight. Lifting her body, pulling at her feet, body, feet, body, feet, and on down.

Finally at the bottom, she scans the room with the flashlight, finds the fuse box on the far wall.

We watch as she drags herself across the cold floor.

We watch as she struggles with a chair to pull herself up high enough to reach the fuse box, grabbing the top of the kiln enclosure to help pull herself up.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Some fumbling with fuses and then, she's done it-- light streams in from upstairs.

PAM sighs. She plays the flashlight over the mysterious objects in the room, trying to see if it will mean anything to her. It doesn't. So now it's time to start her trek back up.

CUT TO:

HALFWAY UP THE STAIRS - PAM

She's making it, but she's tiring, and suddenly, oh shit, she slips, and slides, jarringly, back to the bottom again, breaking her fall, but banging her head on the wall.

She hurts.

We watch her pained look, though we'd rather not, as it turns to despair and she sinks back against the stairs and cries. Good and hard.

CUT TO:

INT. LEON'S BASEMENT - NEXT DAY

DAVID is laying bricks again. This time he's extending the wall of the kiln enclosure to create a new wall, sealing in the evidence. It's chest high already, and gyprock sheets and rolls of wallpaper rest nearby.

INT. KITCHEN

The radio is on.

LEON comes down from upstairs, hung over. He gets himself a glass of water and a few aspirins.

Right in front of the radio sits an envelope marked "LEON". As LEON reaches for it, something on the radio alerts him.

RADIO

... suspected of terrorist activities, was arrested at a house in the Point Grey area yesterday. Three members of the Western Zarathustrian Church were found with him...

LEON rushes back upstairs.

CUT TO:

INT. LEON'S BEDROOM

as LEON pulls something out of a file folder. It's a crumpled photo-- the one of the HEAD PRIEST that ALISON left behind.

INSERT - THE BOTTOM OF THE PHOTO

A caption: "Western Church of Zarathustra"

LEON

Things are clicking over in his head.

He looks out the window toward the house next door.

LEON

Not him.

Then he opens the envelope.

It's a card with a clown on it. One of those sad, pathetic ones. He opens the card, and we catch a glimpse of a handwritten, two-line poem. Then we watch LEON react as we hear:

PAM'S VOICE OVER

(Slowly)

When I squint, I see more clearly.
But the world seems very dim.

(Pause)

Love, Pam.

LEON thinks that one over. Then he looks back at the card.

PAM'S VOICE

(Continuing)

P.S. I had to bump downstairs to
change the main fuse last night.
Had to replace it with the wrong
type.

LEON lowers the card. He sits there looking tormented.

CUT TO:

BACK IN THE BASEMENT

LEON comes down the stairs.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DAVID

(At work)

Hey! We're gonna be done with
this mother, tonight! We're
gonna make it!

LEON

Where's Pam?

DAVID

Search me.

LEON fiddles distractedly with the dynamite charges, whose
power will be used to slam the plutonium halves together
inside the bomb.

DAVID

You're falling for her, aren't
you?

LEON nods painfully.

After a moment, LEON fits the dynamite into position and
closes the bomb housing.

LEON stares at the shiney new atomic bomb, with not what
you'd call a positive expression.

DAVID

Is it ready?

He comes over to look, and on the way he spots something
on the floor, stops to pick it up. It's a hairpin-- one
of PAM'S.

DAVID

Holy shit. This is Pam's.

LEON

Huh? Oh, she--

DAVID

How the hell did she get down
here?

LEON starts to speak again, but stops as something strikes
him.

DAVID

Oh my God! Why didn't I think
of it before!

(Pause)

(MORE)

CONTINUED:

DAVID (CONT'D)

Pam could be a spy!

LEON

A spy?

DAVID

For the terrorists!

(Pause)

Look, what if she can really walk?

Huh? What a perfect way to keep
a check on us! Who would suspect?

(Pause)

Hold on.

DAVID rushes upstairs.

LEON waits. From his face, we can see that something
has just clicked. He knows what he's going to do.

DAVID returns with a fingerprinting kit. He's already
got one print on a strip of transparent tape.

DAVID

This is a print from her bedroom
mirror.

He starts frantically dusting white powder over every
relevant surface.

DAVID

(As he dusts)

Look, we've got to be objective
about this. Forget your feelings
and look at the facts. Like when
did you first meet her? It was
about the time you got the first
offer, right?

LEON

Yeah, it was.

DAVID scrambles over the half built brick wall, to where
the kiln is.

DAVID (O.S.)

And we've never seen the terrorists
watching us, right? And Pam has
never even asked what we're doing
down here!

(A pause, then he pops
up, holding up two
tapes)

(MORE)

CONTINUED:

DAVID (CONT'D)

Hah! It matches for sure! She's been snooping down here!

LEON

(He's not the greatest actor but it's enough to fool DAVID)

Shit! She would have come down right when the substitute pieces were out!

DAVID

Then they'll know we double-crossed them for sure!

LEON

And last night I told her that our experiment wouldn't hurt anybody. That would have made her suspicious.

DAVID

Shit, man!

(Agonizing pause)

I bet she's with them right now!

LEON

That's right! And goddamnit, if they know, there's only one thing we can do! Run!

DAVID

What if-- what if we quickly change it back? Make it so it works?

LEON

No!

DAVID

(Bug-eyed)

But-- holy shit, man! I can't handle this anymore! What do we do?

LEON

David, there's only one thing we can do!

CUT TO:

EXT. LEON'S HOUSE - LATER IN THE EVENING

PAM is on the hydraulic lift, moving slowly, slowly, up.

CUT TO:

INT. LIVING ROOM

PAM enters. She's in pretty good spirits.

The lights are all on and the bathroom and kitchen look a little ransacked. The basement door is open.

PAM

Leon? David?

CUT TO:

EXT. HIGHWAY - NIGHT

as LEON'S car zooms by.

INT. CAR - DAVID AND LEON

Something massive bulges under a blanket in the back seat-- it's the bomb, of course.

DAVID

What are we going to do! Where can we hide! We gotta dump this thing now, man!

LEON

(Shakey but determined to stay cool headed)
Where?

DAVID

Anywhere! Shit man, we've got to hide!

LEON

(Deliberate)
We'll go as far north as we can, change our identities--

DAVID

They'll find us, goddamnit. They've got a lot of power, and we can't stay out in the fucking sticks forever!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

LEON

We might have to.

At this, heavy looks from both of them.

CUT TO:

POV FROM THE CAR - NIGHT

The highway ahead, the glowing trail of cat's eyes on the median.

The dark shapes of unbroken forest on either side.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. ABANDONED MINE SHAFT - MORNING

We see the half-collapsed entrance to an old relic of a mine, and we see it at that rare hour or so when the sun's rays intrude on its normally pitch dark recesses. Part of it seems to be a shaft that drops straight down.

We hear grunting and shuffling in the b.g., and it grows louder. LEON and DAVID come into frame, struggling with the atomic bomb in a rickety wheelbarrow.

ON THE GUYS

as they work to keep the wheelbarrow from tipping over on the steep grade.

LEON is hard to read. DAVID, on the other hand, is sweating like mad, and only part of it is from physical exertion.

On the level in front of the mine entrance, they stop.

As they catch their breath, something moves in the bushes, across, and DAVID whirls toward it, his pistol suddenly in his hand.

DAVID

Don't move!

The bushes move again. He shoots. The rear end of a deer flashes by.

They look.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

LEON

Give me that.

He advances on DAVID. DAVID steps back.

DAVID

This is kill or be killed, man!

LEON

No! That's the attitude that made us do this thing! And I won't have any more of it!

DAVID glares at LEON. He understands how LEON feels, and he looks confused, helpless.

LEON

Do you understand?

DAVID grimaces. A moment, then he hurls the gun off into the bushes.

DAVID stands there, frustrated and unsure of what he just did. But you know, if you look at him real close, he almost seems a little proud of it, too.

LEON

(Sincere)

Thank you.

(Pause)

Let's carry it from here.

Between them, they lug the bomb over to the opening, set it down.

LEON quickly inspects the rickety wooden "elevator" that used to carry the miners and their ore. It still works.

LEON

Set it to detonate.

DAVID

What for?

LEON

So the insides will melt together. Then no one can do anything with it even if they do find it.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DAVID

Okay... there, it's set on one hour.

They set the bomb on the elevator platform. LEON starts pulling the counterweight cable and the elevator jerkily descends.

It must be going awfully deep, because they each take several turns at the cable and it still hasn't hit bottom.

LEON

That's good enough.

They pause to catch their breath.

DAVID

(Peering into the mine)

Maybe we should hide in here.

LEON

No, we have to get as far away as we can so we can find a place and not have to leave it.

DAVID

Yeah, right. We need supplies anyways.

LEON

(Moving out)

Let's go.

DAVID doesn't follow LEON right away, but looks back down the mine shaft.

DAVID

Shit!

(And moves out)

CUT TO:

INT. COUNTRY GROCERY STORE - DAY

LEON and DAVID pile things onto the counter as an old Indian woman adds up the bill. They're getting mainly canned and dried goods, plus whatever else they think they'll get to before it spoils. A tiny Indian boy is trying to pack the shopping bag, trying to copy his elders. LEON takes over the packing, and after staring glumly for a moment, the boy runs outside to play.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

The old woman rings up the total and then-- what was that? and outside the boy is staring open-mouthed in excitement about something and now, god! the whole store starts to shake and things fall off the shelf and then WHUMPP! the sound of a massive explosion, a loud, low rumble.

The woman runs out to the boy and the wind changes direction suddenly and strongly.

LEON and DAVID, petrified, shake out of it and run outside.

OUTSIDE

Over the foothills in the direction they just came from, a huge and dark cloud of ash and debris spreads out from an underground explosion. And the earth still shakes and the trees still blow, and now it's getting warmer.

LEON is immobilized. DAVID runs back inside, slams a bundle of bills onto the counter, and comes back out with the grocery bags, passing the old woman.

DAVID

Keep the change!

He hurries to the car, trying to look as normal as he can, which isn't very.

DAVID

(Through his teeth to
Leon)

Ho-- ly-- shit...!

Now the earthquake is really getting violent. It's a monstrous epileptic fit. There's a cracking sound and up ahead the road has actually split apart about two feet.

LEON finally moves and gets into the passenger seat as DAVID revs the car.

They back out, and LEON seems to have lost the ability to react, beyond staring in horror, as they pull up to the two-lane highway.

And now, all around, we can see debris falling from the sky. Something hits the roof of the car. And the whole area has gone dim from the shadow of the ash cloud.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

A fluttering mass hits the road in front of them-- a bird, writhing on the ground, feathers singed off, obviously in a lot of pain. And they turn onto the highway.

CUT TO:

GROCERY STORE DOORWAY

The old INDIAN WOMAN, clutching the little boy, looks from the sky back to LEON'S car, shakes her head.

INDIAN WOMAN

(Angry)

Hailac oulich white man.

And whatever she said, it's not a compliment.

CUT TO:

INT. CAR - NOT MUCH LATER

DAVID

How the hell did you miscalculate!

We hear a fire engine siren.

LEON

Oh, God, if there was anybody up there--

DAVID

How the hell could you!

We see the fire engine up ahead.

LEON

I couldn't! You moulded part of it!

The fire engine passes, drowns everything out.

CUT TO:

EXT. LEON'S HOUSE - DAY

with police cars all around.

CUT TO:

INT. HOUSE - PAM AND THE COPS

R.C.M.P. officers and detectives pass from room to room and up and down the stairs with papers and fingerprint samples and who knows what. Through the basement doorway we can see more of them down there, and you can imagine how closely they're inspecting the place.

PAM is on the phone, and she's teary-eyed.

PAM

They've been asking me the same questions all day. They won't believe I didn't know about it.

(Pause)

But-- that's what's so confusing. Leon was-- was a good person. I respected him. And he-- and he--

(Holding back tears,
then turning to anger
instead)

Shit! I hate him! He has no right-- to... to...

(Listens, calms)

I'm sorry, I'm okay. But just to think that the other day he was sitting here talking to our group, it's just insane!

(Pause, listening)

That's right! We have to take a tough stand after this!

(Pause)

No, there's no fallout, but that's obviously beside the point. We must have safeguards against people like them!

CUT TO:

EXT. A TORONTO PHONE BOOTH - DAY

Inside it, a GUY waits for someone to answer his call. He looks like a nervous, shifty-eyed, Huckleberry Hound. There's an answer.

INT. BOOTH

GUY

Jack, listen. This is it. I've come across something really big. It's the chance we've been waiting for. Are you in with me?

(Pause)

(MORE)

CONTINUED:

GUY (CONT'D)

Trust me. Just tell me-- can I
count on you?

(Pause)

Good.

CUT TO:

INT. TERRY'S LAB AT THE RESEARCH FACILITY

TERRY is engrossed in his work.

The door opens and two men step in and glance around.
One looks like he's from Scotland Yard-- he's an R.C.M.P.
detective-- and the other is the same GUY we just saw in
the phone booth. Terry doesn't hear them approach because
of the b.g. hum.

DETECTIVE

Doctor Eastman?

(TERRY is startled)

I am Inspector Crane, and this is
the auditor from Atom Manufacturers.

TERRY

(Uneasy)

Oh. Yes.

TERRY goes over to the closet and opens it for them. As
the AUDITOR (the GUY) scans the vials, the DETECTIVE
looks TERRY up and down.

AUDITOR

(To TERRY)

Do you mind if I work at this
empty desk here?

TERRY

No, that's okay.

The AUDITOR gets out his books and starts going through
the serial numbers on the vials.

CUT TO:

SOME TIME LATER

With TERRY, trying to continue his work while the DETECTIVE
sits beside him with a coffee, looking snide, and the
AUDITOR audits away in the b.g.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DETECTIVE
Pretty sloppy bookkeeping for such
organized people like yourself,
don't you think?

TERRY
No.

DETECTIVE
You just had an audit a month or
so ago, didn't you? For a
security problem.

TERRY
And nothing was missing.

ON THE AUDITOR

Checking numbers back and forth, making calculations,
glancing occasionally toward TERRY and the DETECTIVE.
And now he's come to the end of a string of calculations.

HIS PAPER

as he writes the final conclusion:

MISSING: 6 kg.

CLOSEUP - THE AUDITOR

glancing toward TERRY and the DETECTIVE, who pays no
attention.

Now it's time for him to act. He's getting awfully nervous,
but hides it pretty well.

He flips back through his tables and calculations. He
makes a change here, a change there, and a series of them
following, until, finally, the last change, and we see it.

ON HIS PAPER

MISSING: 60 kg.

BACK TO AUDITOR

wiping his forehead. What he's done he has to play through now.

The AUDITOR goes to the DETECTIVE and takes him aside.

AUDITOR

It looks like the stuff was stolen from here alright, there's sixty kilograms missing, and it does look like it happened at the time this Professor Watts paid a visit.

DETECTIVE

We thought so. Sixty kilograms, eh? Is that a lot?

AUDITOR

It's a hell of a lot.

(Anxious pause)

And that's why I want to get back to the company to double-check a few things and then re-audit here next week.

DETECTIVE

Oh, yes, certainly.

AUDITOR

I'll have to get into the room again. With my assistant.

DETECTIVE

Of course.

CUT TO:

EXT. FOREST - DIRT ROAD - DAY

LEON'S car jerks along slowly, over rocks, and goes out of sight around a bend.

It's a peaceful forest. A squirrel hops into view.

CUT TO:

INT. HELICOPTER - THE CONSOLE - DAY

A lot of chopper noise, and we can see over the console down to the forest passing below, and on the console is a contraption with a digital readout, some kind of direction-seeking compass, and a little light that blinks to the sound of a beep! beep! we can hear.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

And now we see who's in the copter.

AMBROSE

raises a microphone to his lips.

AMBROSE

We're picking them up now. Should
be able to get a direction soon.

CUT TO:

EXT. THE FENDER OF LEON'S CAR - DUSK

A squirrel hops into frame, jits about, and we follow
it underneath the car.

UNDER THE CAR

The squirrel jits around, looking toward the light of a
campfire and the sound of a radio from on the other side
of the car. It leaves the frame in the direction of the
light, and now we notice, just above where the squirrel
had been, a little metal box that shouldn't be there,
stuck with magnets to the undercarriage. And if we listen
carefully we can hear a high-pitched, regular beeping
sound.

EXT. BESIDE THE CAR - LEON AND DAVID

They sit at the campfire, cooking dinner, having made a
quick camp for the night with a rough lean-to of cedar
boughs against the car.

The police band radio and the normal radio are playing
at the same time. DAVID is stirring the food, LEON is
looking over a map, and Spring is blossoming on the trees
all around them.

LEON

There's an Indian fishing village
about eighty miles east of us.
Why don't we try around there?

DAVID shakes his head disparagingly.

LEON

We could catch fish.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DAVID

Fishing is seasonal and I don't know about growing food out here. It's not usually this warm in April.

LEON

But further north will be worse. And our best bet is to keep away from towns and people. There's lots of free land around here.

DAVID

You're expecting us to live like the fucking pioneers!

LEON

I think we can learn.

LEON goes to a thicket of thorn bushes and cuts out a thorny stalk.

He peels it, and hands a piece to DAVID. LEON starts eating his. DAVID tests his out. It actually tastes good.

LEON

I've always wanted to know what it's like to live off the land.

DAVID

Yeah, well, the cops may not find us, but those terrorists will!

LEON

Listen!

ON THE RADIO

-- special bulletin about the atomic explosion near Brackendale two days ago. There is absolutely no danger-- repeat, no danger-- from radioactive fallout, because of the depth of the rock. Vancouver is safe from underground leakage, but nearby towns are being evacuated. The R.C.M.P. say the bomb was built at the home of a Vancouver physics professor. The physicist has stolen sixty kilograms of high grade plutonium, enough to build ten atomic bombs. The F.B.I. and the

(MORE)

CONTINUED:

ON THE RADIO (CONT'D)
Armed Forces have joined in the
search for the suspects...

LEON
(Dumbfounded)
I only took six! They must have
got their numbers mixed up.

DAVID
(Jumps up)
I don't believe this! What the
fuck is happening, huh?
(Points to the sky)
I'm beginning to think someone
up there is out to get us!

CUT TO:

EXT. INDIAN STYLE LODGE - DAY

In a clearing just off a small road, an old INDIAN man with long braids works on a totem pole that's laid out on supports in front of the lodge. Smoke curls from the chimney and Indian chanting can be heard faintly from inside.

LEON'S car pulls into the clearing.

DAVID and LEON get out. They go straight for a beat up old truck parked nearby and they check it out.

The old INDIAN doesn't even look up as they walk over to him.

DAVID
Um, excuse me.

The INDIAN looks up from his work. He has a piercing gaze.

LEON
We would like to trade you our
car for your truck.

The INDIAN looks them up and down.

DAVID
It's the best deal you'll ever
get... The car is worth two grand
easy.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

No response.

LEON
 (Points to car)
 Our car--
 (Points to truck)
 your truck. Trade.
 (Gestures)

LEON holds out his car keys. They wait nervously.

The INDIAN gets down from his stool, walks over to his jacket, takes out his own keys, and holds them out.

They make the exchange.

LEON
 Thank you very much.

DAVID
 I hope it runs.

CUT TO:

CLOSER TO THE LODGE

The truck pulls away in the b.g. as the old INDIAN enters the lodge.

INT. LODGE

And we're surprised. It has modern furniture; wall-to-walls; expensive, framed native art paintings; a Van Gogh; art dealer magazines; and the Indian chanting comes from a record on the stereo.

His wife takes off her headphones and turns off the record as the INDIAN goes to his radiophone and dials, waits.

INDIAN
 Could you connect me with
 Officer O'Brian, please?

The wife starts another record. Stravinsky this time.

CUT TO:

EXT. A NARROW PAVED ROAD IN THE MOUNTAINS - THE OLD TRUCK - DAY
 Winding its way along, so far so good.

CUT TO:

INT. MOVING POLICE CAR - TWO COPS - DAY

OLDER COP

(Into mic.)

... Over.

(To YOUNGER COP)

Looks like this is up to us now.

Got that license number?

YOUNGER COP nods. OLDER COP is a balding local constable with a life of picking up drunken Indians and breaking up bar brawls. Now finally he's in the Big Time-- where heroes can be made. They screech onto a side road.

CUT TO:

EXT. BACK AT THE INDIAN'S LODGE AGAIN

as a helicopter grows from a spot above the trees to a healthy size, hovering stationary over the clearing.

INT. HELICOPTER - AMBROSE

With that beep! beep! again, only much louder.

AMBROSE

(Pointing)

There it is.

The old INDIAN comes out of the lodge to look at the intruder, and the copter takes off.

AMBROSE

(To the mic. again)

We finally caught up with them.

The transmitter is still working

but it looks like they switched

cars.

Back inside the helicopter we catch a glimpse of several men with rifles and parachutes. They look lethal.

CUT TO:

INT. WESTERN ZARATHUSTRIAN CHURCH - THE HEAD PRIEST

sitting in the same spot we saw him in last time, but with only ALISON beside him, and he's listening to his short-wave radio.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

AMBROSE'S VOICE (FILTER)
We'll have to go by the police
broadcasts now.

HEAD PRIEST
(Into his own microphone)
Well however you do it, find them!

AMBROSE'S VOICE (FILTER)
Don't worry. You still hold the
cards as long as the police think
there's more bombs.

HEAD PRIEST
If those two talk-- you walk!
(And as he switches
off, he's trembling)
Oh, Great Ahura Mazda! Channel
your life force through me now!

And he pushes ALISON down so her head is somewhere in his
lap, where we can't see.

And she's doing something down there and the HEAD PRIEST
trembles even more and rolls back his eyes.

CUT TO:

INT. THE TRUCK - LEON AND DAVID - SUNSET

On the same road.

DAVID is reading a newspaper article to LEON and there's
a big photo of PAM on the front page, and we see closer.

THE ARTICLE - HEADLINE

"ATOMIC TERRORISTS' HOME
BECOMES ANTI-NUKE HEADQUARTERS."

THE GUYS

DAVID
She's heading the group's Nuclear
Safety Lobby, working out of your
house.

(Pause)
She's really pissed off, too...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

LEON

(Sad)

Poor Pam.

DAVID

(Looks at him oddly)

Holy shit, Leon, you think she's
innocent after all! Don't you!

But LEON doesn't show one way or the other.

CUT TO:

EXT. FARTHER UP THE ROAD

A police car pulls out of a dirt side road and stops
across the middle of the main road, blocking it.

Those TWO COPS jump out and kneel behind their open doors,
guns ready.

REVERSE ANGLE

just as the old truck pulls around the far corner, and the
COPS turn on their lights and siren.

INT. TRUCK - LEON AND DAVID

DAVID

(Goes white)

Oh god.

LEON looks powerless. He starts to slow to a careful
stop in front of the police.

But DAVID suddenly and ferociously grabs the wheel from
LEON, slams his foot onto the accelerator, and swerves
the truck off onto the dirt side road. The COPS start
shooting.

DAVID

Come on! Come on!

LEON takes over again, stupified, mechanical.

The back windshield shatters from a bullet.

The truck careens crazily, crests the hill just as one
of the tires is shot out. They swerve dangerously, and
the road ends. Stop.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DAVID jumps out and races frantically up the incline toward the woods.

DAVID

Come on!

LEON follows hesitantly.

CUT TO:

IN THE WOODS

And we're with them as they run like mad, crashing through the underbrush, desperate for a place to hide.

The narrow tree trunks zoom by us, and the low sun strobes through them.

Every direction looks the same.

CUT TO:

EXT. A CLEARING IN THE WOODS

Grassy, filled with man-made beehives. You might call it a bee farm. A few bees are flying in and out of the openings in the bottoms.

And the two guys come upon the clearing. DAVID runs right in. He looks around anxiously.

LEON

David! David. We can't do this!

DAVID runs over to the far end of the clearing and opens the top of one of the beehives.

DAVID

These ones are empty!

(He climbs into it
and crouches down)

Hurry!

LEON hesitates. Then runs over to the hive next to DAVID'S.

He opens it and gets in. They peek out at each other from under the lids of these odd wooden boxes, and it's ridiculous, but really, who would look for them here?

A TOTEM POLE

stands nearby, watching them with its spooky eagle eyes. And with the eyes of bears, snakes, and spirits, too. The totem pole seems to be mocking them.

CUT TO:

BACK IN THE WOODS - THE TWO COPS

as they trample through the bush, guns drawn, nervous.

CUT TO:

INT. BEEHIVE - DAVID

crouching in the dark, sweating.

CUT TO:

IN THE WOODS

as the COPS come to the edge of the clearing. The OLDER COP ventures in toward the beehives.

INT. BEEHIVE - LEON

He looks ashamed.

There's a buzzing, and a bee flies around his head. He frowns at it.

Then several more bees emerge. They're coming from a little crack in the bottom corner.

EXT. BEE FARM

The OLDER COP gingerly lifts the lid of one of the beehives. Inside it's swarming with bees. He shuts it fast.

INT. HIVE - LEON

A dozen bees sit on his head and hands and buzz around him. LEON anxiously tries to brush one off his face and OUCH! it stings him. He thrashes around a bit, only to get himself stung again. And at that he throws up the lid of the hive to get rid of the fuckers.

EXT. BEE FARM

The OLDER COP whirls with his gun. LEON stares in shock.

OLDER COP

Freeze!

The YOUNGER COP runs toward them.

DAVID'S lid pops up, and after a split-second pause, he throws off the lid and springs out of the hive.

The OLDER COP shoots-- and on the BANG, my god! a massive, absolutely massive, swarm of bees pours out of several hives.

DAVID gets up. The air buzzes and the COPS scream as the hoard of bees attack them.

DAVID

(Taking off)

Come on!

LEON jumps out and follows DAVID numbly. They disappear into the woods at the far end of the clearing, while the COPS, at the other end, run around like decapitated chickens, under the thick cloud of angry bees.

CUT TO:

IN THE WOODS - MOVING WITH LEON AND DAVID

as they race through the trees again.

The ground is bare here and they can make better time, but still, they seem to be getting nowhere.

CUT TO:

EXT. TWILIGHT SKY - HELICOPTER

It's the one we've seen before, and it's pretty foreboding.

One by one, three parachutists drop out.

Their chutes open immediately and they float silently down toward a large open farmyard.

EXT. FARMYARD

Freshly tilled furrows and a large barn at one end, nothing else.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

It's cold and starting to drizzle as LEON and DAVID appear at the edge of the woods, exhausted and out of breath.

DAVID points. They start to cross the farmyard toward the barn, lit only by the moon now.

EXT. BEHIND THE BARN

A man moves like a leopard in the shadow, reels in his parachute, looks back at two others who've just landed, barely visible against the tree line. The man moves to the side of the barn, finds a large power switch on the wall.

CLOSEUP - AND IT'S AMBROSE

EXT. FARMYARD - LEON AND DAVID - LONG SHOT

We can just make them out, running across the plowed earth. They freeze at the sound of the helicopter.

The helicopter glides in towards them from the side they had entered from, dropping one more parachutist.

LEON and DAVID split and take off in different directions.

The helicopter turns on its searchlight, and right after it does, huge outdoor floodlights blaze on, illuminating the whole field.

LEON and DAVID freeze again. They must be scared almost to death by now.

DAVID

turns and runs for the tree line. But up ahead is one of the parachutists with an automatic rifle, not firing but running straight at DAVID. DAVID swerves away again.

LEON

running for all he's worth now. He sees another man ahead.

EXT. POWER LINES

The helicopter comes too close and its runners catch on one of the power lines and snaps it. Sparks leap, the wires oscillate back and forth, and the field is now being lit as if by a strobe, bright to black intermittently.

WITH DAVID

running in the strobe light-- everything he sees is like an uneven series of snapshots. Suddenly there's a man ahead of him again. Frozen in a run. Closer.

WITH LEON

running in the strobe light. A man appears real close. Flash-- he's closer. Flash-- he's aiming. Flash-- LEON'S terrified face.

EXT. FARMYARD - WIDE SHOT

The searchlight adds to the chaos as the three men close in on LEON and DAVID, flushing them toward the barn, where AMBROSE waits. The helicopter descends behind the barn.

LEON AND DAVID

In flashes-- closer to the barn; strained faces; images of the pursuers.

Flash by flash they close in, and all along we can hear LEON and DAVID'S gasping breath.

Then there's AMBROSE ahead.

DAVID goes for him.

SERIES of flashed poses like out of a kung fu movie. And DAVID is down flat.

Flashes of LEON receding. Struggling with a pursuer. Returning. Head on with AMBROSE.

And AMBROSE is all around LEON. And LEON is down, held by AMBROSE.

The others gather. And now the flashing finally stops.

In the dark-- a grunt, heavy breathing.

AMBROSE

Move out!

Footsteps.

CUT TO:

INT. HELICOPTER - NIGHT

as it flies low, and fast, with all its lights out. AMBROSE sits in front with the pilot.

IN THE BACK

LEON and DAVID huddle together with their arms tied, and the three men sit quietly beside them, their job done.

OUT THE SIDE WINDOW

In the distance, the search lights and insignia of military helicopters can be seen crossing back and forth in search patterns.

PILOT (O.S.)

Just made it.

BACK INSIDE

AMBROSE chuckles. He's an awfully confident bastard.

Now AMBROSE looks at LEON and DAVID. They're clearly expecting the worst.

AMBROSE

So. Now that we're all here, I would like to extend my appreciation to you two. I don't know your motive, but you've given us more than we could have asked for.

(He smiles)

We have much more leverage now with ten bombs.

He chuckles at their confused and pathetic expressions. The others start to chuckle a little, too.

AMBROSE

(To the men)

Untie them.

And to LEON'S and DAVID'S surprise, they do.

AMBROSE

(To LEON)

Why did you detonate it?

No response, and AMBROSE smiles again, not really expecting an answer.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

AMBROSE

In any case, the authorities now believe that we have nine more atomic bombs.

(Pause)

So. Although you broke our contract, I have here a little honorarium for your services.

(He hands LEON an envelope)

And we're arranging to get you safely to South America. You're on your way right now.

LEON has opened the envelope-- a thick wad of hundred-dollar bills.

AMBROSE

Ten grand.

You can imagine how astonished they are. Hope comes seeping back, but it's still too bizarre to really believe.

AMBROSE

Of course you realize that we cannot permit you to return to this continent again.

DAVID

But-- Why are you doing this?

AMBROSE

(Smiles)

Business. I'm hired on my reputation, and I have a record of never killing anyone unless it's necessary.

(Pause)

But mainly I figure you might want a little "management" later with all that extra plutonium of yours.

DAVID

(After a hesitant moment)

We don't have any.

AMBROSE

Oh, right. Come on.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DAVID and LEON exchange looks. Better to let him keep thinking they have it.

AMBROSE scrutinizes them for a long moment.

But finally he shrugs and sits back.

AMBROSE

I'd sure like to know what you think you're up to.

DAVID

(Almost to himself)

So Pam wasn't working for you.

LEON

(Getting bolder)

What do you think you're up to?

AMBROSE

(Smiles)

That's a big surprise. Even I don't know. But we all will soon enough.

LEON

You're working for the Zarathustrians.

(AMBROSE doesn't react.

There's a pause.)

How's Alison?

AMBROSE

(There's nothing to hide by this point)

Fine.

DAVID

Where are we going?

AMBROSE

We're arranging right now for a seaplane to transfer you to the coast. There's a freighter there that's heading for Argentina.

The two guys look incredulous, but you can see they want to believe it real bad.

LEON

I hope this isn't some kind of morbid joke.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

AMBROSE
Ever thought of running a banana
plantation?

Nothing more is said, but we still hold on them for a moment.

CUT TO:

EXT. SMALL PRIVATE AIRPORT

In a secluded location.

The helicopter lands and they all spill out and head toward a building at the side of the field. A seaplane sits on its pontoons at the other end of the runway. Time is of the essence.

The group meets with the pilot of the seaplane. We see AMBROSE shake hands with LEON and DAVID. It's not exactly a bond of brotherhood.

LEON, DAVID, the pilot, and one of the men as an "ESCORT", leave to board the seaplane.

The four of them cross the runway.

EXT. RUNWAY - WITH THE FOUR OF THEM

Spirits aren't bad, considering. But LEON looks anguished.

LEON notices a small mail truck driving across the runway, heading toward a mail box up ahead.

For LEON, something clicks. It's subtle, but we can see it in his face. He slips a few bills out of the envelope and hands them to DAVID.

LEON
Here.

DAVID is puzzled. He sees LEON seal the envelope of bills and take a pen from his pocket.

He writes on the envelope:

PAM OWEN
COALITION FOR APPROPRIATE TECHNOLOGY
NUCLEAR SAFETY LOBBY

and starts the address, which used to be his own.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

LEON glances at DAVID as he finishes the address. DAVID looks alarmed, but he holds his tongue, trying desperately to evaluate what LEON is about to do.

LEON gives DAVID a fixed, determined look. And DAVID finally looks at his feet in compliance. They are close to the mailbox now.

LEON

(To the ESCORT)

Would you wait for a moment please,
I have to mail a letter.

The group comes to a halt.

ESCORT

Huh? Oh. Yeah. .

The ESCORT accompanies LEON over to the mailbox.

LEON puts the letter in just as the mailman approaches to unload the box.

CLOSEUP ON LEON

He smiles. A wry sort of grin. Something has been satisfied.

CUT TO:

EXT. THE AIRFIELD

as the seaplane crosses the frame in the close f.g., lifting into the air and continuing, diagonally, across the sky.

And as it dwindles away, the mail truck crosses, diagonally, across the pavement of the runway, in the opposite direction.

And we hold on this until the plane and the mail truck are both specks, moving in their own separate directions.

FADE OUT.

End.